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VOLUME IV

THE MESSAGES OF THE PROPHETIC AND PRIESTLY HISTORIANS

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THE MESSAGES OF THE PROPHETIC AND PRIESTLY HISTORIANS

THE WRITINGS OF THE HISTORIANS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, ARRANGED SO AS TO DISTINGUISH THEIR PRINCIPAL SOURCES, AND FREELY RENDERED IN PARAPHRASE

BY

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To

MY FATHER

PREFACE

In accordance with the general purpose of the series to which it belongs, this volume on the "Messages of the Prophetic and Priestly Historians" aims at presenting the essential, that is, the religious messages of the historical books of the Old Testament, as those messages are reached and interpreted by the scholarship of to-day. To the attainment of this aim, some preliminary critical discussion is indispensable; for, on the ground covered by these books, arise many of the most keenly debated problems of the Old Testament—problems too numerous and grave to be even adequately stated, far less disposed of, within the limits prescribed by the conditions of the series, and by the restricted space at my disposal. I have tried, as clearly and briefly as I could, to give some sketch of the manner in which these problems are dealt with, and at least approximate results attained, by modern scholarship. But the sketch is in no sense a plea; it is simply a dispassionate presentation of the facts, and I have sought never to go beyond inferences which the facts seemed to warrant. The argument for the positions adopted is really cumulative, and is strengthened by numerous considerations which there was no opportunity here for discussing. In

the Hexateuch, there is almost an unanimous consensus among Old Testament scholars with regard at least to the main results of the discussion ; in Ezra-Nehemiah, that unanimity has not yet been reached.

One of the greatest difficulties that besets, for the general reader, the scientific study of the Old Testament is the absence of any easily accessible criterion to distinguish the original sources from the later redactional material. By typographical devices an attempt is here made to overcome this difficulty, the original sources being always printed in plain type, and the redactional matter in italics, capitals, small or bold-faced type, as the case may be.[1] Many of the difficulties will thus be found to vanish of themselves. All that is printed in plain type may be used as a basis for the study of the history, and I have sought, where possible, to make it read continuously. Brackets are used to indicate that the passage enclosed has no direct authority in the original text, but is supplied on high warrant for the sake of the connection. The poetry and the legislation interspersed throughout the historical books have been, with hardly any exceptions, omitted, as they are to be dealt with in other volumes of this series.

The task of paraphrase was not the least difficult of the problems which this volume had to face. To retell the inimitable stories of the Hexateuch is clearly impossible, especially under the conditions of a paraphrase which was

[1] See pp. 97, 100, 248, 286, and 320.

often obliged to compress a whole paragraph into a word, and a chapter into a line or two. I have tried so to tell the stories as to let the religious truth which they embody shine through them, and to present that truth, which sometimes seems to us so quaint and far away, in a form intelligible to modern religious experience.

Sections which are duplicated (as in the Hexateuch) or repeated from other books (as in Chronicles) are paraphrased only once. The disadvantage occasioned by isolating the first four books of the Hexateuch and starting a new section with Deuteronomy, seemed to be more than compensated by the opportunity thus secured of discussing the far-reaching influence of Deuteronomy on the subsequent books of the section.

My debts are many. In particular, I should like to acknowledge my special obligations to Steuernagel's "Einleitung in den Hexateuch," Dillmann's "Commentaries on the Hexateuch," Bacon's "Triple Tradition of the Exodus," the volumes of Moore and Smith on Judges and Samuel in the "International Critical Commentary," and Benzinger's volume on Kings in the "Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament." I have been much helped by the unfailing and generous courtesy of both the editors of the series, who have devoted much time to the revision of the volume. They read all the proof through, and contributed many valuable suggestions. I also desire to record my thanks to my friend, the Rev. Dr. George Bruce,

of Toronto, for his kindness in reading the first half of the proof, and for many helpful comments. Owing to my absence in Germany, I have not been able to exercise full control of the final revision, and crave indulgence for any slips that may be due to this cause.

The problems raised by the historical books of the Old Testament are of exceptional interest and difficulty. But it must never be forgotten that criticism is only a means to an end. It fails, if it does not lead us to a more reverent appreciation of the ways of God with man. The Old Testament is more than a field for the exercise of critical acumen. It is a word of life; and our deepest concern is with the life which it reflects and inspires, not with the literary problems which it involves. The large outlook of its historians upon the progress of the centuries; their splendid interpretation of history; their triumphant faith in Israel's mission and destiny; their overwhelming consciousness of God as the Lord of all, inspiring history with a sense of purpose, guiding it toward a divine event, bending to the consummation of his purpose the resources of the world which he created and controls, calling and equipping men from generation to generation to advance that purpose and to interpret his will, following his people in love through all their wilful way, seeking, by a discipline which was often stern but always gracious, to bring them into that fellowship with himself for which man was originally destined: these are the things that are precious to the

Christian church; and criticism is welcome only in so far as it sets those things in a clearer light and brings them home to our hearts with a mightier conviction. The problems with which criticism deals are real; their burden is felt not only by the professional critic, but by everyone who reads his Old Testament with intelligence and imagination. But they do not touch the heart of the matter. Deeper than all with which criticism can directly deal is the audible pulsing of a life at once human and divine, a life which grew richer and deeper as the centuries rolled from the exodus to the exile. The goal of all true criticism is to understand that life more adequately and sympathetically. It is in this spirit that the present volume is written, and with the conviction that no believing man can watch the purpose of God unfolding in Old Testament history without having his own faith quickened and rekindled.

JOHN E. MCFADYEN.

ESCHWEGE, GERMANY,
August, 1901.

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THE PROPHETIC HISTORIANS

THE PROPHETIC HISTORIANS

I

ORIGINS OF HEBREW LITERATURE

Hebrew literature begins with poetry. Behind the period of formal literary effort lies the period of the ballad, which celebrates in vigorous and memorable form the rugged experiences of a people that had often to do with war. The outstanding facts of early times leave their mark in song as well as in tradition: and both together form the material for the historian of those times. The great deliverance of the Red Sea was sung in at least some of the verses which now form the Song of Moses (Ex. 15). The victory of Joshua in a desperate crisis over his confederated foes in the south (Josh. 10: 12, 13), and in a later day the triumph of Deborah and Barak over the deadly Canaanite chariots in the north (Jud. 5) were committed to posterity in stirring song. Such crises as these ensured their own immortality.

Poetry comes first

It was natural, therefore, that one of Israel's earliest books should be entitled the Book of the Wars of Jehovah (Num. 21 : 14). Jehovah, it was, who led his people to

War ballads

victory. A snatch of old poetry (Num. 10 : 35, 36) shows us Jehovah going before his people to battle, and returning after the fray to rest among them. Another early book from which two and perhaps three[1] quotations occur is the Book of Jashar, the Upright—we might almost say the Brave, in the old sense of that word—which may have been devoted to Israel's heroes. It sang of Joshua (Josh. 10 : 13) and contained David's elegy over Saul and Jonathan (2 S. 1 : 17-27). How these sources were used by the historian, we see to some extent by comparing the prose story of Judges 4 with the very old poem in Judges 5; and the danger to which they were exposed at the hands of later interpretation is suggested by comparing Joshua 10 : 13^{b}, 14 with the original words of the poem. Most of the poetry that is certainly early shows how fierce that old life was : as Lamech's song of vengeance (Gen. 4 : 23, 24) and Samson's song of triumph at Lehi (Jud. 15 : 16). But there were tender strains, too—voices of peace and harmony—such as the graceful Song of the Well (Num. 21 : 17, 18).

Formal literature hardly possible before David

Literature demands opportunity, and that opportunity did not come till the consolidation of the monarchy under David and Solomon. After that, history becomes at least possible. There is a keen national consciousness; and

[1] A probable emendation of the LXX of 1 K. 8 : 13 suggests that the words with which Solomon dedicated the Temple occurred in it. (1 K. 8 : 12, 13.)

there are materials in ancient songs and vivid traditions, associated in many cases with particular shrines. Somewhere between that time and the literary prophets we are safe in looking for the prophetic histories. But precisely where and how to look, it is the function of criticism to discover.

II

THE NECESSITY, NATURE, AND VALUE OF HEXATEUCHAL ANALYSIS

The Hexateuch is a unity

The Pentateuch is a unity, traditionally associated with the name of Moses. But while the death of Moses at the close of Deuteronomy fittingly concludes the story of his life and work with which by far the greater part of the Pentateuch is occupied, it is not an adequate sequel to the promises made and the hopes raised by the earlier parts of the Pentateuch. There the land of Canaan was again and again promised to the fathers, in Numbers and Deuteronomy that promise is only partially fulfilled by the acquisition of the territory east of the Jordan. The book of Joshua, which deals among other things with the campaigns and the ultimate settlement in the west, is the necessary complement to the story of the Pentateuch. Together they make up one theme. When to this is

added the fact that the literary features which characterize the Pentateuch reappear in the Book of Joshua, it will be seen that we are justified in regarding as our unity not the Pentateuch but the Hexateuch, that is, the first six books of the Old Testament.

Not the unity of authorship; for there are many incoherencies

But what kind of unity is it? Is it that of an author or that of a compiler and redactor? If there exist within the compass of the work, still more if there exist side by side two mutually exclusive versions of the same incident, then by the constitution of the human mind, unity of authorship is excluded. What, then, are the facts? It will be instructive to examine one or two chapters on the assumption of their unity and see whether they present a coherent picture or not. Take for example Exodus 32. Here is a really dramatic incident—an apostasy and an intercession. So much is clear; but the detail is not only obscure—it is conflicting. In verse 14 the apostate people are forgiven by their God. In verses 19 and 20 they are punished by Moses. In verses 25 to 29, three thousand of them are slain by the tribe of Levi at the command of Moses in execution of the express command of God, who had pardoned them but a few verses before. Nay, in verse 35 God actually punishes them himself, after having in verse 34 suspended the punishment for the second time. Nor is that all. Is it not at least strange that Aaron, the head of the priestly tribe, should abet the idolatry which is so severely punished by the swords of

that tribe? *Corruptio optimi pessima.* Aaron should have been the first to fall.

Or again, take Numbers 16, which deals with what is usually called the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. According to verses 8-10 the rebels are Levites, and their crime is that, not content with the subordinate service of the sanctuary, they "seek the *priesthood* also." According to verse 3 (cf. 27 : 3) the rebels, headed by Korah, number others in their ranks besides Levites, and their claim is that the whole congregation is holy, with the implication that the tribe of Levi does not possess exclusive sanctity. Again, according to verses 13, 14, they charge Moses with exercising undue authority and disappointing the hopes which he had raised when he led them out of Egypt. It is surely no accident that often, though not always, Dathan and Abiram are mentioned by themselves (vv. 12, 25; cf. Dt. 11 : 6) and Korah by himself (vv. 5, 6, 16, 19). Again, according to verses 31 to 34, the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the rebels, them and theirs. Yet, in spite of that, "fire came forth from Jehovah and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense" (v. 35)—not another body, but the same, on the assumption of the unity of the chapter (cf. vv. 2, 17). Still later, and still more remarkable, we are expressly told that "the children of Korah died not" (26 : 11).

Neither of the chapters discussed can claim to give a coherent account of the event they describe. Often with-

Incoherencies even in adjacent verses

in the compass of even two or three verses are to be found statements irreconcilable with one another. For example in Numbers 13 : 21 the spies go from the southern wilderness to the extreme north of Palestine; in the very next verse, they only go as far as Hebron in the south of Judah—much the more probable representation, considering that the country to be spied was hostile. Again, according to Genesis 35 : 19, Benjamin was born near Bethlehem; seven verses later, we are told that all Jacob's children, including Benjamin (v. 24), were born in Paddan-aram. Again, in Genesis 6 : 19, two animals of every sort are to be taken into the ark; in Genesis 7 : 2 a distinction is made between clean and unclean—the former to enter in groups of seven pairs, the latter in single pairs.

Contradictions

The illustrations have been purposely selected to show that contradictions may be found within the same chapter, and even within the compass of a verse or two. But where, by reason of their separation, such contradictions are not so obvious, they are none the less real. Perhaps the most conspicuous is in the account of the tabernacle. In Exodus 33 : 7, its place is outside the camp, and it is guarded by Joshua (v. 11); in Numbers it is in the centre of the foursquare encampment, and in the charge of Levites. Equally perplexing on the assumption of the unity is the deliberate and very important statement of Exodus 6 : 3 that God was not known to Abraham by his name Jehovah, in the face of the earlier statement in Genesis

15 : 7, where he appeared to Abraham and said, "I am Jehovah that brought thee out of Ur." Sometimes the contradictions are not only implicit as here, but expressed in so many terms. For example in Numbers 20 : 14-21 the Edomites refuse to allow Israel to pass through their country; in Deuteronomy 2 : 1-7 they consent. In Exodus 18, tribunals to relieve Moses of part of his judicial functions are appointed on Jethro's initiative; in Deuteronomy 1 : 9-18 the proposal comes from Moses himself. Other contradictions, though less important, are not less interesting and significant. In Genesis 43 : 29 and 44 : 20 Benjamin is a youth; very soon afterward he is the father of ten sons (46 : 21). In Genesis 46 : 9 Reuben has four sons; very shortly before he has only two (42 : 37). In the story of the creation, according to Genesis 1, plants and animals are made before man; in chapter 2, man is made before them.

Obscurities

Often, too, where there are no inherent contradictions, there is an obscurity and confusion which it is not possible to reconcile with unity of authorship. The story of Joseph, which has the unity of a great career behind it, is well worthy of study, with a view to ascertaining whether it can be an original literary unity. One who does not know the simple solution that criticism offers by assuming the presence of two different sources in the story will find it hard to understand the situation in Genesis 37 : 18-28. It is full of movement and color. Here if anywhere all

should be clear. The artist has a style that is bold and picturesque. Yet the detail is surprising. Why do the brethren not sell Joseph as they propose (v. 27)? In point of fact, they do; according to verse 28[b] they, that is, the brethren, not the Midianites, sold Joseph; but the verse, as it stands, suggests that it is by Midianites that he is sold. The truth is that, in one version—that in which Judah is prominent—Joseph is sold on Judah's proposal to the Ishmaelites who take him to Egypt (39 : 1); in the other version, which gives the prominence to Reuben, he is left in a well where he is found by Midianites and taken to Egypt (37 : 28). Reuben's horror at the sight of the empty well is as intelligible on this view as it is surprising on the theory that the story is all from one hand. This discovery furnishes the key to further discrepancies, such as the representation of 43 : 21, where the brothers discover the money in their sacks at the first inn, with that of 42 : 35, where the discovery is not made till they reach home.

Chronological difficulties

Discrepancies so numerous and sometimes so serious as to amount to contradictions are inconsistent with unity of authorship. This conclusion is also supported by the chronological notices, which are often as surprising in their implications as they are remarkable in their precision. Sarah, for example, who is ten years younger than Abraham (Gen. 17 : 17), must have been sixty-five or even older when her charms captivated Pharaoh (12 : 4, 10-20).

Twenty-five years afterward she has the same fascination for Abimelech (20). When Hagar leaves Abraham's household—as the story is told in Genesis 21—Ishmael is a little child whom she can carry on her shoulder (21: 14, LXX); but according to the chronology he should be almost a man by this time, as his father is now over a hundred (17 : 17, 24) and he was eighty-six at Ishmael's birth (16 : 16).

Duplicates

Further, against the view that the Hexateuch is an original literary unit is the presence of two and sometimes more versions of the same story. The origin of the name Beersheba is twice explained; once in connection with a treaty between Abraham and Abimelech (Gen. 21 : 31) and once in connection with a precisely similar treaty between Isaac and Abimelech (26 : 33), having a precisely similar origin in the conspicuous prosperity of the patriarch which makes his friendship worth having. This duplication is particularly common in etymologies. Indeed, on three different occasions the etymology of the name Isaac (laughter) is suggested. In one (Gen. 18 : 12) it is referred to the incredulous laugh of Sarah when she overhears the promise the divine stranger makes to Abraham. In another (21 : 6) it is the laughter of joy after the birth of her child. In yet another (17 : 17) it is the incredulous laughter of Abraham, who thinks he is too old to have a son. Three times, too, does a patriarch deny his wife: Isaac once (26 : 1-11), and Abraham twice (12 : 10-20 and

20 : 1-18), all three times under precisely similar circumstances. Now it is not impossible, though it is suspicious, that Isaac should be in circumstances precisely similar to Abraham, and should have acted in precisely the same way. But it is more than suspicious, it is improbable, that two such stories told of Abraham, resembling each other in all essentials, and neither making the smallest allusion to the other, correspond to two separate incidents in his life. One of the most significant repetitions is connected with the revelation of the name Jehovah. In Exodus 3 : 13 ff. Moses does not know the name of the God of the fathers; the name of Jehovah comes to him as a new revelation and marks a new departure (v. 15). Exodus 6 : 3 ff. presents the same idea, and says expressly what Exodus 3 says implicitly, that the name Jehovah was unknown to the fathers; they knew him only as El Shaddai. The presence of such duplicates, repeating an earlier story with no serious addition, sometimes with no addition whatever, and often in almost exactly the same words, proves as conclusively as the discrepancies do, that the Hexateuch is not from one hand.

First clew: two names for God —Jehovah and Elohim

But this conclusion may be stated positively as well as negatively. The Hexateuch must be from two or more hands. Now is it possible to find any clew to the elements that our argument compels us to believe have entered into the composition of that whole? It is. The most obvious clew—and this discovery is as old as the year

1753—is that certain sections in the Book of Genesis, as for example chapter 1, use the Hebrew word Elohim [1] for God, whereas certain other sections, as chapter 18, use the word Jehovah.[2] Throughout these sections and many others, this use of the words is consistently maintained. That is surely no accident; for we find precisely the same distinction running through the duplicates. One section uses Jehovah; the parallel section, with the same story to tell, uses Elohim. Take the two versions of the covenant between God and Abraham in Genesis 15 and 17. Here the difference in detail is considerable, but the central fact is the same; the pact is definitely and even formally made. The first version, however, employs only the word Jehovah; the second (with the exception of v. 1) only the word Elohim. A similar difference obviously distinguishes Genesis 1 : 1 to 2 : 4[a] from Genesis 2 : 4[b] to 3 : 24, though in the latter section, for special reasons, the longer form Jehovah Elohim appears. The story of the creation is really told twice. Man is already created and even blessed (1 : 27, 28) when chapter 2, in a much more primitive spirit, describes his creation anew.

On the basis of this discovery, then, we should suppose that there were two documents, differing in their use of the divine name, and differing so uniformly that it would

[1] Represented in the English Bible by the word God.

[2] Wrongly represented in the English Bible by "the Lord." This translation is ultimately due to the LXX.

Sections may be separated on this basis, and thus the characteristics of the respective documents be ascertained

be easy to mark off the sections which belong to each. It is not, however quite so easy; for in what is to all appearances a single section, the names appear to be interchangeable or at least interchanged. The story of the Flood, for example, uses both names freely. But closer examination, so far from vitiating the conclusion reached, really corroborates it. Genesis 6 : 6-8 and 7 : 1-4 cover precisely the same ground as 6 : 9-22—God's determination to destroy the earth for its wickedness, and to save Noah for his righteousness. The former is a Jehovistic passage, as it is called; the latter is Elohistic. In other words the transitions in the use of the divine name are not arbitrary, but coincide with the transitions involved in the duplication of the story. By closely watching the characteristics of language, phrase, style, and sentiment within the sections whose origin is certain on the basis of the use of the divine names, our knowledge of these characteristics grows, and thus enables us to mark off, often with equal certainty, other passages where the absence of the divine names deprives us of our most important clew. In this way, the first nineteen chapters of Genesis could be relegated, even by the unskilled reader, with at least approximate certainty, to their respective sources. Our data are now extensive enough to justify us in tentatively tabulating the leading characteristics of the two sources and their most significant contrasts.

The contrasts are indeed very significant, and are at

first most profitably studied on the basis of the parallel accounts. Only one or two salient points can be here suggested. The creation stories are both exceedingly impressive, but impressive in different ways. The Elohistic story—1 : 1 to 2 : 4a—is formal, orderly, severe, precise, with an almost legal precision. Notice the many repetitions "and it was so," obviously designed on the part of the writer and typical of his method. These features characterize other sections whose Elohistic origin is certain: 17 : 12, 13, 23, 27 (law of circumcision) and 9 : 1, 2, 7 (blessing of Noah). The last section is specially instructive, as it not only shows the writer's love of repetition and precision, but also adopts a vocabulary characteristic of chapter 1 (cf. "Be fruitful and multiply," 1 : 22, 28; and the enumeration of the animals 9 : 2 and 1 : 26, 28).

The contrasts are very striking. The Elohistic sections

A very different picture is presented in the passages certainly Jehovistic. The first creation story was almost religious philosophy. The second is almost religious romance. The first was precise, the second is picturesque. In it, one of the animals can speak. Adam and Eve are figures of an intensely human interest. The divine Being has a startling and all but human reality. Not merely is his presence grandly suggested, as in the first story; he is brought vividly upon the scene. He walks about in the garden in the cool of the day. So through all the other Jehovistic stories, this mighty figure moves, as real as the

The Jehovistic sections

creatures of flesh and blood whose salvation is his heart's desire. We hear his voice. We can almost touch the hem of his garment—so close is he. He shuts the door of the ark behind Noah (Gen. 7 : 16). He comes down from heaven to see the city and the tower which men are building (11 : 4, 5). He eats the cakes Sarah had baked, and speaks to Abraham as a man to his friend (18 : 22, 23).

There are really two Elohistic documents, and consequently three chief documents in all

The contrast between these two conceptions is too obvious to be denied, and this is only one of many contrasts which differentiate the Elohistic and Jehovistic passages. With this key in our hand, it would seem possible to unlock any chapter, and compel it to lead us to its source. But a grave difficulty is created by Genesis 20. It tells for the second time the story of Abraham's denial of his wife (cf. 12 : 10-20), using the word Elohim where the previous story had used Jehovah. But almost every other characteristic of the Elohistic document—so far as the argument has shown us what these are—seems to fail. This story is not formal; it is as picturesque as the Jehovistic story, and is indeed, except for some minor differences not unimportant in their own place, practically a replica of the other story. Here the argument would halt, but for one very important fact, touched on before (p. 12), namely, that there are two accounts of the revelation of the name Jehovah, one in Exodus 3, the other in Exodus 6. In other words, there is not one document but two which regard the name Jehovah as revealed for the first time to

Moses, and consequently unknown before him, and for this reason deliberately avoid it throughout the Book of Genesis. The Jehovistic document assumes the existence of the name Jehovah from the beginning; it is known not only to Abraham (15 : 7) but even to the antediluvians (4 : 26). The facts then compel us to admit the existence of three documents, not two; one Jehovistic, and two Elohistic, one of which—that represented by the first creation story of Genesis—is a striking contrast to the Jehovistic in style and tone, and the other—that represented by Genesis 20—is, in the main, very like the Jehovistic. It is to be carefully noted that only the latter is now called by criticism the Elohist; the former is called the priestly[1] writing, because it is written in the same style and displays the same interests as the book of Leviticus and certain parts of Exodus and Numbers which deal almost entirely with the priestly legislation.

The clew to the origin of a chapter or section yielded by the name of God is exceedingly valuable. But in the nature of the case, this criterion breaks down—not quite, but almost entirely—after Exodus 6, when all three sources are free to use the name Jehovah. And although, after that point, the priestly sections are usually very easy to distinguish, as their characteristics are so unlike those of

The Jehovist-Elohist

[1] The abbreviations in common use for these documents are J, E and P. Further discussion of the priestly document is reserved for the third part of this volume, dealing with the priestly historians.

the other documents, it is seldom possible to distinguish with much confidence between the Jehovist and the Elohist, as they have so much in common. For that reason, and for the further reason that the Jehovist and Elohist documents, originally independent, were subsequently united to make one whole and consequently often closely interwoven with one another, it is customary to speak of this source, at any rate, after Exodus 6, as the Jehovist-Elohist.[1]

Differences between the Jehovist and the Elohist. Examples: (1) Abraham's denial of Sarah

For the purposes of this volume, which are rather religious than critical, the Jehovist and the Elohist, writing in much the same spirit, and latterly combined, as has just been said, are treated as a single source even in Genesis, attention being simply called to the duplicates, which on this view need no special treatment, as they deal with the same or similar facts and illustrate the same lessons. But it may be well to show briefly how the critical division between the Jehovist and the Elohist is effected in passages where, in the absence of the divine name, there is no obvious clew, and how this division can be occasionally effected with something like certainty even in passages subsequent to Exodus 6. For this purpose a study of the duplicates is indispensable; for in duplicates the peculiar interests of each source will be most obvious. Contrast, for example, the two stories of Abraham's denial of Sarah. The Jehovist (Gen. 12 : 10-20) tells a plain, unvarnished tale; he is

[1] Known to criticism as J E.

unembarrassed by Abraham's falsehood and cowardice. Not so the Elohist. His moral sense is more delicate. He feels the necessity of excusing Abraham, or at least of letting him offer his own excuse (20 : 12). His religious sense is also more advanced. Whereas the Jehovist, as we have seen, often brings God bodily upon the scene, in the Elohist he usually appears, as here, in a dream (20 : 3). The latter story is more reflective than the other; and in keeping with this, Abraham is more idealized. Here he is a prophet (20 : 7). His prayer, like Job's (Job 42 : 8) is potent to restore Abimelech (20: 7, 17).

(2) The departure of Hagar

The view that the Elohist is an advance upon the Jehovist is corroborated by the very next chapter, which deals with the departure of Hagar (21 : 8 ff.) and duplicates the Jehovistic story in 16 : 5 ff. Here Abraham is sorry for Hagar and deals with her more clemently than in the previous story. He does not leave her to Sarah's tender mercies, but sends her away provisioned, and even then only at the command of God. Whereas in chapter 16 (cf. 7-11) the angel of *Jehovah* speaks *directly* to Hagar and is spoken to by her, in 21 : 17 the angel of *God* calls to her *out of heaven*, and is of course not addressed in turn by her. The tendency to idealize is seen also in the different turn given to Sarah's laughter, which is now the laughter of joy (21 : 6). The same tendency is conspicuously seen in the Elohist's account of Jacob's success under Laban. This success is ascribed in 31 : 5-12 (E) to the

intervention of God; in the previous chapter, to the skill and craft of Jacob (30 : 25-43 : J). Notice, too, the dream in 31 : 11. In accordance with this higher religious standpoint, images are at least implicitly condemned. For it is hard not to see a touch of irony, all the more delicate that no comment is made, in the description of Laban's search for the teraphim, upon which all the while Rachel is sitting, 31 : 34 (cf. Josh. 24 : 2, 14; Gen. 35 : 2).

How sections are relegated to their documentary sources

Every paragraph whose limits can be determined, adds to our knowledge of the style, vocabulary, and theological tendencies of the source from which it comes, and thus enables us to delimit other sections, whose origin is not obvious at the first glance. Often where all such hints practically fail, we may yet feel fairly confident of the source, if the section is inconsistent with some other section whose source is, for any of the above reasons, practically certain (cf. the Joseph story). This new section in turn advances our knowledge of the source to which it belongs. Later sections which clearly allude to, or imply, an earlier section will of course belong to the same source. It is in this way that the plagues of Egypt have been relegated to their respective documentary sources. Thus, by a process which is often very delicate and difficult, but always scientific, results that are more than approximate have been reached, and the original documents that have gone to make our present Hexateuch, at least partially reconstructed.

III

DATE AND PLACE OF ORIGIN OF THE PROPHETIC DOCUMENTS

The Elohistic and Jehovistic documents belong to the Northern and Southern kingdoms respectively

No records have been left either of the time or place at which the documents were composed, any more than of the manner of their composition. For the determination of these we are consequently thrown back entirely upon internal evidence; and that may be said to be of two kinds —historical and theological. We have already seen reason to believe that the Elohist is later than the Jehovist. From the prominence he assigns to sanctuaries in the northern kingdom, from the rôle that Reuben plays in the Joseph story, as well as for other reasons, it has been conjectured that the Elohistic document is a product of the northern kingdom. On the other hand, from the prominence assigned to Hebron in the stories of Abraham and Jacob, from the rôle assigned to Judah in the Joseph story, where he and not Reuben takes the initiative, and from the interest in and knowledge of Judah displayed in Genesis 38, it has been supposed that the Jehovistic document originated in the southern kingdom—at least in its present form; for this document, too, is interested, though not to quite the same extent as the other, in the northern sanctuaries. The supposition that the documents belong to dif-

ferent kingdoms becomes all the more probable, when we remember how fundamentally they differ in their view of the time at which the name Jehovah was revealed, and consider how improbable it is that conceptions so different should arise within a community exposed to the same political and religious influences.

United before 621 B.C.

The Jehovistic and Elohistic documents were at one time united. It is impossible to say precisely when, but the century at least may with tolerable certainty be fixed. After the fall of the northern kingdom in 721 B.C., a reason exists for the fusion of the documents which did not exist before. And Deuteronomy, published in 621, already appears to presuppose that fusion. It probably lies therefore between 721 and 621; not impossibly in the reign of Hezekiah, which was an age of reform and of some literary activity.

Each document is the work of a school

Hitherto we have spoken of the Jehovistic and Elohistic documents, as if each was the work of a single author. More probably, however, they were the work of a school, and represent a literary and religious activity that ranges over a considerable period. For within each document, discrepancies of the same kind are observable, though not so palpable, as were found to distinguish the Jehovist and the Elohist from one another. The Jehovist, for example, who traces the descent of shepherds, musicians, and workers in metal, to Lamech's children (Gen. 4 : 19-22), can hardly have told the story of the Flood, which interrupted

the continuity of human life, though this story has also a Jehovistic source.

Each document, then, represents a period rather than a single author. Is it possible to determine that period approximately? Clearly the earlier notices at any rate were written long after the event. No contemporary could possibly have designated Shechem's outrage of Dinah as folly *in Israel* (Gen. 34 : 7). There was no Israel as yet. The clew, however, yielded by the anachronism, is a valuable one, as it implies the nation and national life, and thus the passage could not even conceivably be earlier then Moses. But according to Genesis 12 : 6 and 13 : 7 (both J) the Canaanite was *then* in the land, the implication being that by the author's time they had no longer a separate existence. As late as David's time, however, there were Jebusites; indeed Jerusalem was their fortress, and years after its capture Jebusites are still in the city (2 S. 24 : 16). Thus the days of the monarchy are implied (cf. Gen. 36 : 31), and this conclusion is confirmed by the express allusions to the king in two songs (Num. 23 : 21 and 24 : 7), incorporated in the prose narrative and necessarily older than it. The subjection of the Canaanites appears to be implied by Genesis 9 : 26[1] (J), and this was not attained till the time of Solomon (1 K. 9 : 21). The Jehovistic document then cannot be

Neither could be earlier than the time of David or Solomon

[1] If, however, this be merely a wish, as it may be, the passage would be earlier, and the argument falls.

earlier than the time of David or Solomon. Throughout it there breathes the spirit of joy. The people are in glad possession of their beautiful land, rejoicing in the worship of the sanctuaries that are scattered about it, and to which patriarchal memories still cling. The earlier limit for the date is thus fixed.

Nor could they, in the main, be later than Amos and Hosea

The lower limit is determined by the circumstance that the fusion of the documents had been already effected before 621 B. C.; the separate documents must of course be older. But the date may be pushed still further back. The popularity of the northern sanctuaries which is suggested by the profound interest displayed by the Hexateuch in their origin finds its counterpart in the pages of Amos and Hosea (roughly 750-735), according to whom the most enthusiastic worship was maintained at some of these very sanctuaries, like Bethel, Gilgal (cf. Am. 4 : 4; Hos. 12 : 11). The date of the documents might then be as late as that. It has been further maintained that these prophets betray acquaintance with the narratives of the documents in their present literary form; in that case, the documents would be still older. But such references to Hexateuchal narrative as that of Hosea (12 : 3, 4) to Jacob, or to the exodus under Moses (Hos. 12 : 13, cf. Mic. 6 : 4) need prove no more than that the narratives were familiar to prophets and people, possibly through oral transmission, not necessarily through a fixed literary medium. At the same time, the Jehovist document is probably older.

Here the argument from theology comes to our aid. The conception of God found in Amos, and especially in Hosea, is a distinct advance on that of the Jehovist. Not indeed in range or intensity. For there is, as we saw, a startling reality about the Jehovist's conception of God; and according to him, too, all the earth is God's. He created it, and he can wield the powers of nature even in a foreign land for his own righteous ends, and for the good of the people whom he loves. But there still plays about his conception a certain naïve anthropomorphism,[1] which has disappeared by the time we reach the prophets. It is fascinating, but it marks an earlier stage of religious thought. The fine religious imagination which lies behind such a passage as Exodus 24 : 9-11 where the company on the mountain "saw God, and did eat and drink," is unquestioned. Yet it is hardly consistent with the severe spirituality of Hosea. Even in the Hexateuch itself there is a passage[2] which, in vigorously insisting that Israel only heard a voice at Horeb, and saw nothing, looks if not like a protest, at least like a correction of this more primitive representation.

The Jehovist, at least, is probably earlier

Of course this argument cannot lead to any precise result, but it seems to compel us to carry the date about a century behind Amos and Hosea, say to 850 B. C. It could not, as we saw, be earlier than David or Solomon.

Perhaps about 850 B. C.

1 Cf. Ex. 4 : 24-26 for an extreme instance.

2 Dt. 4 : 12, 15.

Nor could it well be contemporary; time must be allowed for the growth of literary interests and a purer religion. More than this we cannot say. The note of exultation which rings through the Jehovistic story seems to be an echo of peace and victory rather than of disquiet or defeat. Such a temper suits the date suggested (about 850) better than the period immediately before, or immediately after, which were both troublous. Of course, considering that this document represents a long movement, and was not executed all at once, there is every probability that certain sections, especially the more prophetic in tone and temper, come from a later day.

The Elohist may belong to the second decade of the reign of Jeroboam II.

The Elohistic document may well be, in the main, at least three-quarters of a century later. Many of its elements are doubtless very old and primitive. But, generally speaking, its more delicate moral and religious feeling which makes the same kind of advance upon the Jehovist that Amos and Hosea make, and its earnest polemic against the strange gods[1] would admirably suit the time of Jeroboam II., somewhere between 770 and 760 B. C.[2]

[1] Gen. 35 : 2; especially Josh. 24 : 23, cf. Hos. 2 : 13, 17.

[2] It is only fair to say that there is considerable disagreement among critics as to the dates of these documents, and even as to the priority of the Jehovist. I have sought to avoid confusion and controversy, by presenting the line of argument which seems to me, on the whole, the most probable.

IV

THE PROGRESS OF THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS

The prophetic history, known as the Jehovist-Elohistic document incorporated in the Hexateuch, tells the story of Israel's origin, early discipline, and settlement in the land of Canaan. Her origin is in God, the same God who made all men and all the world. Therefore her story, which does not strictly begin until the call of Abraham in Genesis 12, is significantly rooted by the historian in the wider story of humanity. This liberal outlook, despite much that seems to contradict it, is characteristic of the whole history. The keen[1] and often friendly interest in other nations, attested by the story of Joseph in Egypt, is prophetic of the day when all nations would be citizens of the new Jerusalem, and call Zion mother.[2]

In the beginning God

The story opens with the tragedy of human existence— disobedience to the reasonable voice of God, under the fascination of some plausible but ruinous temptation. Man falls from his God-given destiny by the exercise of a false choice; the problem of the Bible—of the Old Testament no less than the New—is how he is to be restored. His fall compels the intervention of God who made him

The tragedy of disobedience

[1] Cf. Gen. 10. [2] Ps. 87 : 5 (LXX).

and loves him, and he sends him forth in chastisement to a life of battle and sorrow. But the struggle on which his sin has launched him is not to be without hope, for God himself is interested in the issue.

Redemption through an elect people

As if to thwart the redemptive purpose, soon a deeper plunge is made by man—from disobedience to murder; and the descendants of the murderer are the representatives of civilization. A new step in the way of knowledge is a step away from God: not perhaps of necessity, but in fact. The weapons forged by the workers in iron are deadly weapons of war, wherewith men wreak vengeance. The first poem that meets us in the Bible (Gen. 4 : 23, 24) is a glorification of revenge. There is indeed always a witness for better things, always an Abel or a Noah; but in the main, the world goes on from bad to worse. Its wickedness at length is so terrible that the righteous God must overwhelm it. It must die for baffling his purpose; and the Flood is made to fulfil his will. But his will is also to save those who deserve to be saved, and Noah, because he is a righteous man, is spared (7 : 1). With the new generation, however, that springs from him remain new possibilities of sin, which soon become actualities. The old story bids fair to be repeated. It is against this sad and sombre background that the divine purpose of redemption begins to unfold. The human race must somehow be won for God. But how? By electing a certain nation to the function of teaching the world his nature and

his will. The ancestry and preparation of this nation will be of the highest moment, and with unusual interest we watch the divine selective process beginning.

It begins with the call of Abraham; in that call the world was given a new opportunity. Abraham is called from the land of his birth to another country which, for many reasons, historical and geographical, was peculiarly fitted to be the scene of a historical revelation, and, as the land of promise, is always closely associated with the destinies of his people. Abraham obeys the divine voice; and his obedience is justified by his subsequent fortunes, which show how specially God was guarding his interests, crowning him with a prosperity which causes neighboring kings like Abimelech to court his friendship, and preserving him from such a fate as that of Lot who pitched his tent in Sodom and paid for his choice so heavy a penalty. He makes his mistakes (12 : 10-20 and 20 : 1-18) but God overrules them. The moral majesty of the man justifies the divine choice of him. A lover of peace with an inbred horror of contention, hospitable and chivalrous, not careful to insist narrowly upon his own rights, sternly righteous yet strangely tender-hearted, pleading for the wicked city with an earnestness that would not be baffled even by God himself—such a man is Israel's earliest father. And how sensitive he is to the divine voice! He obeys its first call, its every call—whether to leave his country or give up his son, his only son. He can trust that voice when it

Abraham

whispers to his heart words of high destiny for him and his. It is with such a man as this that God makes a covenant (15) and speaks the thoughts of his heart (18 : 17). Surely he was worthy to be the father of the people through whom God was to bring to the world the knowledge of his blessed will.

Isaac

In Isaac, the son whom he loved and was willing with tears to lose for the higher love he bore his God, the divine purpose is continued. Isaac is not the giant his father was, but he is not unworthy to stand in the succession. For Israel needs men too who can go out to the fields to meditate at the turning of the evening (24 : 63).

Jacob

But it is Jacob, Isaac's son, sharply contrasted with Esau, the ancestor of Israel's neighbors the Edomites, that is the most characteristic figure. For good and for evil, he is an Israelite indeed. A man of undoubted ability and resource, with full knowledge of an adversary's weakness and power to take advantage of it, never embarrassed, always ready to adapt himself to a new situation not only with skill but also with cunning—altogether a clever unscrupulous schemer who at first sight presents a painful contrast to the bluff and chivalrous Esau. But there are deep and beautiful things in this man too. He too could meditate, like his father, when the stars came out. On a bare hillside, he could see angels come and go from heaven to earth, and ere he crossed his river of destiny he could wrestle in the dark with one like unto a son

of man. He sees the unseen, and God's host meets him as he goes on a critical way. His hidden life contains infinite possibilities, just the possibilities which count for everything in religion. So it is quite fitting that he, like his people, should be called Israel. He is a man worth winning, though it is only by a hard discipline that so self-reliant a man is won. His deceit drives him from his home and from the mother who had schemed for him; we never read that he saw her face again. In the foreign land he is deceived again and again by one who was his match and almost his master. He comes back with the old terror in his heart which years before had driven him away—yet a schemer still. But God lays his hand upon him, forces him to reckon with the unseen powers that are shaping his destiny and claims him for his own.

At length he settles in the land of promise, and the elect man is now Joseph his son. His story is more than usually romantic; but through it the divine purpose runs clear—that God's chosen instruments need special discipline, and that the royal way is a way of sorrow. The propriety of the divine choice of him is as obvious here as it was in the case of Abraham. His early life is very impressive, in its dreams dashed, its hope deferred, and promise baulked. It is as sad as it is beautiful. He has to face cruelty from the brethren who should have loved him, separation from a father who counts him his dearest, ingratitude from the man he has helped, infamous

slander from those in whose service he was willing to give all that he had but his honor. But through it all he keeps his spirit bright. What moral heroism breathes through his reply to the temptress in Egypt! With all the alertness of his father, he springs full-armed to meet every new difficulty, be it dream or temptation or threat of famine; and though he is strong he can also be tender unto tears. And in the end God sets this man of heaven-born insight, heroic faith, and invincible hope over the affairs of one of the greatest of empires, and places in his debt a hungry world.

Israel in Egypt

The scene is now shifted to Egypt, and there interest is concentrated for a period both long and sad. The divine purpose seems baffled: but nothing can really baffle it. God has high ends to serve by the sojourn of Israel in Egypt, and in his own good time he will deliver them, with the impress of his nature upon them.

V

THE WORLD OF SIN (Gen. 2 : 4^b to 11 : 30)

1. *Man's Place in the Universe and his Choice of Sin* (Gen. 2 : 4^b to 4 : 24)

Man: his origin, task, and duty of obedience (Gen. 2 : 4^b-17)

Man is the handiwork of God; his spirit is the breath of his maker. God, when he made him, appointed him a task—that of tilling the ground and gathering her fruits,

and he gave him all that satisfied eye and heart. But the task had its temptations. He was permitted to enjoy the fair and pleasant fruits of the garden in which God had placed him ; but there was fruit in that garden which to touch was death. So said conscience and God.

Woman his peer and complement (2 : 18-25)

Now man needs companionship ; and among the beasts there is none that can be called his fellow. He needs a being like himself, and such a one God gave him in woman. She alone is his peer; in wedlock he and she are no more twain, but one.

The tragedy of evil choice (3 : 1-13)

Then to the woman came one day temptation with the sinuous coils and the glittering eye that fascinates. Why should she not satisfy her curiosity and touch that fair forbidden fruit? It could not cost so dear as God had said; they surely should not die. Rather would their knowledge grow by this forbidden venture. Conscience and passion pled within her. At length she fell, and the man was involved in her fall. They had indeed won knowledge, but it was knowledge of their shame—knowledge of how terrible a thing it is to disobey the earnest reasonable voice of God. They sought with vain things to hide their shame and to flee from the searching sound of the voice divine. But in the evening hour God found them, smitten with remorse and shame, but not yet with humble penitence ; for the man accused the woman, and the woman the passion that had against her better heart misled her.

The penalty (3 : 14-24)

Then in stern, solemn words through which there yet gleamed hope, God uttered his word of judgment upon their disobedience.

> "Sin shall go on from age to age, struggling with man for the mastery, and man shall be wounded as he tramples upon it; but he shall crush it in the end." [1]
>
> "Woman, as mother and wife, shall have sorrows many to bear."
>
> "Man shall have to wring his sustenance from the stubborn earth in fierce struggle that will bring the sweat to his brow, and in the end he shall return to the dust whence he came."

Then God provided for the man and his wife, the mother of us all, a better covering for their shame than that which they in their extremity had made. But their sins had shut them out from the right to immortality; the way thither was barred by powers divine and strong.

The progress of sin (4 : 1-16)

Now Eve bore Adam a son, Cain, in the mystery of whose birth she recognized the hand of God. Abel, his brother, was a shepherd, while Cain was a tiller of the ground; and each expressed his thanks to God by the

[1] The actual words only speak of a ceaseless warfare between humanity and the serpent. But the triumph of humanity seems implicit in the words, partly because the serpent is cursed, partly because man, by his origin, sustains special relations to God, and the divine purpose of his creation must not be permanently baulked. (So Dillmann.)

sacrifice of that whereby he won his livelihood. But the spirit of the offerers differed as did their gifts, and God rewarded them accordingly. Cain was jealous. The sin which he should have vanquished, sprang upon him and choked his brotherly feeling, and he treacherously murdered the brother whose keeper he should have been. But the deed of blood haunted him; a voice pursued him; and he was forced to wander far from God, homeless and in terror, about the stubborn earth. Smitten with horror at the thought of his lonely and perilous doom, he cried to God, and received his gracious promise of protection from the avengers of blood; for blood-revenge is hateful to God. So forth he went—from the presence of God.

The progress of culture (4 : 17-24)

But not to wander, rather to settle and build a city; and it is the offspring of this violent and godless sire that are the fathers of civilization. They gave the world the shepherd life, the fine and useful arts, such as music and working in metal, and they knew the power of woman. The violence of that impious culture rings through Lamech's song of vengeance.[1]

Beginnings of worship (4 : 25, 26)

Those days also saw the beginnings of true worship.

2. *Sin Abounding* (5 : 29; 6 to 11)

Noah (5 : 29)

After Lamech came Noah the comforter.

How death entered (6 : 1-4)

To check the evils arising from the union of humanity

[1] With him also begins polygamy.

with beings superhuman, God limited the life of man to one hundred and twenty years.[1]

The Flood. The wrath and the mercy of God (6 : 5-8; 7 : 1 to 8 : 22)

Vexed by the corruption of humanity, God determined to blot out every living thing, all but Noah, with whom he dealt in grace; for Noah was a good man. So, by the divine command, he and his household entered the ark with beasts and birds of all kinds, of the clean seven pairs, of the unclean one pair, that in the world to be the species might be preserved alive; and God shut the door behind him. All that were in the ark he preserved in safety throughout the forty days of rain which destroyed every living thing, and until the waters had subsided, leaving the ground dry. So Noah acknowledged God in sacrifice. Then God, well-pleased, resolved to deal henceforth in patient love with man, whose will from youth was sinfully inclined; and never again to smite the earth or to interrupt the order of nature in judgment.[2]

The blessing and the curse (9 : 18-27)

Noah began to cultivate the vine, and fell into shame through the wine thereof. Ham, fit ancestor of the licentious Canaanites, went and told his brethren; and Shem, the father of the Hebrews, with Japheth his brother, covered their father's shame. Then Noah pronounced a curse and a blessing: a curse fulfilled this day in the subjection of the unchaste Canaanites; the richest blessing

[1] This ancient and interesting fragment is not a continuation of the previous narrative, but forms in reality a parallel to 3 : 22-24, and gives another explanation of how death came into the world.

[2] About half of chs. 7 and 8 belongs to the priestly historian.

upon Shem, whose children have the true God among them; and the blessing of peace and a wide domain to Japheth.

(Now these represent the three great families of mankind): To the Hamites belong the Babylonian empire,[1] founded by Nimrod, the mighty hunter king—an empire whose power and culture travelled north to Assyria: also various branches of the Egyptian people, from whom come the Philistines and Cretans; further, the Canaanites with Sidon, their oldest settlement, the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites, and the peoples of five northern cities near Lebanon. The Canaanites stretched from Sidon in the north to Gaza in the south. The divisions of mankind (10 : 8-19)

To the Semitic family,[2] which is the oldest, belong first and foremost the Hebrews; and with them are connected the Arabs. (10 : 21, 25-30)

Mankind, yet undivided,[3] boldly sought, against the divine purpose, to secure itself against dispersion by building a city with a great conspicuous tower, where all could concentrate. But God defeated their soaring ambition, destroying their unity, by confounding their language. Hence the many tongues spoken by men. So they scattered over all the earth. Meaning of diversities of language (11 : 1-9)

[1] This is scientifically doubtful.

[2] Probably this notice was originally preceded by one dealing with the Japhetic nations.

[3] This section must therefore be from a different source from the two preceding paragraphs.

Abraham (11 : 28-30)

(To the Semitic family belongs) Abraham, whose home was in Mesopotamia[1] and whose wife Sarah had borne him no children.

VI

THE FATHERS OF THE HEBREW PEOPLE

1. *The Discipline of Abraham* (12 : 1 to 25 : 6)

(1) *The Call of Abraham and the Divine Care of Him* (12 and 13)

The call of Abraham (12 : 1-9)

Abraham was stirred by a divine impulse[2] to leave his home and all that he held dear ; for it was the purpose of God to make of him the great Hebrew nation, centre and pattern[3] of blessing to all mankind. In obedience to the voice, Abraham with Lot moved westward to Canaan, and at Shechem by the sacred tree, a vision of Jehovah woke in his heart the assurance that this was the land, occupied though it then was by the Canaanites, that his descendants would one day inherit. There he gratefully acknowledged Jehovah in worship, as also at Bethel, and then moved southward.

[1] So, apparently, in this document, cf. 24 : 10. Ur, if it be the Babylonian city, represents rather the tradition of the priestly document.

[2] Cf. 20 : 13 (E).

[3] "Shall bless themselves," not "shall be blessed" (v. 3). There is no missionary thought here.

Driven by famine from the land of promise to the land that was one day to be the house of bondage, Abraham there imperilled the promises by exposing his wife to the danger of being united to a foreign prince. But God revealed his watchful care over the fortunes of the chosen but erring patriarch, by interposing to save his wife.

Divine preservation in Egypt from self-incurred peril (12 : 10-20)

Then Abraham went back with Lot to Bethel, where, full of its early memories, he again called upon his God. Now their great wealth bred strife between their herdsmen. Abraham, though all the land was his by promise, nobly offered Lot his choice. Lot chose the fair land about the wicked cities just across the borders, near the shore of the Dead Sea; and thus, in the providence of God, Abraham was left alone in the promised land which, he was divinely assured, would one day belong to his seed innumerable. Then he moved to Hebron, which became his home, and there he acknowledged his God.

Separation from Lot, Abraham's magnanimity overruled in his ultimate interests (13)

(2) *The Strain and the Reward of Faith* (15 : 1 to 25 : 6)

Abraham, however, grew despondent; for what was such a promise to a childless man? But his despondency was met by the divine assurance that no stranger, but a son would be his heir, and that his seed would be numberless as the stars. So he trusted God, and God counted that as a mark of his righteousness, confirming by a covenant his assurance that all the land, from Nile to Euphrates, would one day be possessed by his seed, and dis-

Promise of a son confirmed by a covenant (15)

closing to him their stern fortunes crowned by ultimate triumph.

Hope deferred weakens Sarah's faith; flight of Hagar (16 : 1, 2, 4-14)

Sarah's faith, however, was not equal to the strain. She impatiently sought to secure the promised son by a way of her own, which brought discord to her home, and inspired her with a harshness that drove her handmaiden away, but not away from God; for in the desert by a spring of water, he[1] found and comforted the lonely woman, destined to be the mother of the wild and warlike Bedawin.

The message of the heavenly visitants (18 : 1-15)

One day there came to Abraham's tent three heavenly ones in the guise of travellers, to whom the hospitable patriarch gave of his best. They brought with them the assurance that the fulfilment of the divine promise was drawing nigh; but the aged Sarah laughed incredulously; and God was angry at her little faith, for nothing is too hard for him.

Abraham pleads for Sodom and Gomorrah (18 : 16-33)

Now this heavenly visit also served the end of noting the wickedness of the cities where Lot had his home; and somewhat of his purpose God revealed to Abraham his friend, seeing that he had elected him to a high and holy task. Then Abraham pled for the wicked cities with an earnestness that would not be baffled—pled that the bad might be spared for the sake of the good; and God showed himself just indeed, yet exceeding merciful, more willing to spare than to destroy.

[1] The angel is identified with Jehovah himself (v. 10).

Finding Sodom given over to the vilest sins, and therefore doomed to destruction, the angels urged the righteous Lot to flee with all that were dear to him. But his Sodomite sons-in-law made a jest of it. Even Lot himself lingered, for his was not the ready obedience of Abraham; yet he was saved, with his wife and daughters, through the mercy of God toward him. His wife, however, looked back and perished. Thus was God's word to Abraham fulfilled.

But their utter wickedness has doomed them irrevably (19 : 1-28)

Lot's choice of Sodom avenged itself in the corruption of his daughters, who, by a wickedness proscribed in Israel, became through him the ancestresses of Moab and Ammon, peoples of hated name.

The trail of Sodom. Origin of Moab and Ammon (19 : 30-38)

Divine preservation from self-incurred peril (20).[1]

At last faith had its miraculous reward. Through Sarah, Abraham had a son in his old age.

An heir at last (21 : 1, 2, 6, 7)

Expulsion of Hagar (21 : 8-21).[2]

Seeing how Abraham prospered under God, Abimelech made a treaty of eternal friendship with him, restoring to him the well Beersheba,[3] where still stands the sacred tree planted by the devout patriarch.

Abraham's covenant with Abimelech at Beersheba (21 : 22-34)

[1] 20 (E) is parallel to 12 : 10-20 (J). This is practically the first point where the Elohistic document appears. For comparison of the duplicates, see Introduction, pp. 18, 19.

[2] The Elohist's parallel to 16, according to which Ishmael is not yet born. For other differences, see Introduction, p. 19.

[3] Two derivations are here suggested, pointing to two different sources: well of the oath, and well of the seven. The Hebrew consonants for the words "seven" and "swear" are the same.

Sacrifice of Isaac; sorest test and noblest triumph of faith (22 : 1-19)

Then came to Abraham the supreme test of his faith, in the impulse to do as did the people of the land, and offer to his God in sacrifice his beloved son—which meant the sacrifice of all his hopes. With breaking heart, yet in unflinching obedience to the voice within, he took his son to Mount Moriah, now the temple-hill. He raised the knife, and in spirit the sacrifice was complete. Father and son had surrendered their will to the will of God. But in the blood of the children the God of Israel had no delight, and lo! at the crisis he provided a substitute. So the daring faith of Abraham was justified and rewarded by a renewal of the divine assurance.

Abraham's kinsfolk in Aram (22 : 20-24)

Now Abraham was related to the Arameans, whose tribes like Israel's were twelve.

From among them a wife is found for Isaac (24)

Trusting in the God who had guided his past, he sent his servant to these his kinsmen to find a wife for Isaac; for Isaac must not imperil the promises by marrying a woman of Canaan, nor yet by leaving the promised land. With grateful joy, the servant found himself led of God to just such a bride as Isaac needed—her energy watching his contemplation. Her kinsfolk saw in this the hand of God and yielded her up with high hopes for her destiny. Thus she became the wife of Isaac.

Abraham's descendants (25 : 1-6, 18)

Abraham was the ancestor of certain Arab peoples, and also of the Bedawin.

2. *The Discipline of Isaac* (25 : 11 to 26 : 33)

Isaac's home was in Beer-lahai-roi.[1] Isaac's home (25 : 11b)

Again faith was tried by the long tarrying of the heir. But in answer to prayer, God sent the barren Rebekah twin sons, who even in the womb foreshadowed the long fierce struggle of the peoples[2] that would spring from them, and the victory of the later born: Esau the hunter, slave of instinct and appetite; Jacob the shepherd, cunning indeed, but with his eye upon the unseen and the future, who won from Esau his birthright. The twin brothers and their differences (25 : 21-34)

Divine preservation from self-incurred peril (26 : 1-11).[3]

Isaac's prosperity woke the jealousy and enmity of the Philistines, but at last God gave him rest and room for Abraham his servant's sake. Isaac's prosperity, troubles and triumphs (26 : 12-25)

Isaac's covenant with Abimelech at Beersheba (26 : 26-33).[4]

3. *The Discipline of Jacob* (27 : 1 to 35 : 22)

(1) *Banished by Sin* (27 : 1 to 28 . 22)

Isaac was minded to bestow his paternal blessing on his first born, Esau, contrary to the divine purpose which had elected Jacob. Yet all unwitting, he was made to Jacob wins the blessing by fraud and has to flee (27)

[1] Cf. 26 : 62.

[2] The Edomites and the Israelites.

[3] The Isaac parallel to the Abraham story in 12 : 10-20. This (also J) is possibly the older of the two stories: cf. 20 (E).

[4] The Isaac parallel (J) to the Abraham story in 21 : 22-34 (E).

fulfil that purpose, and he gave Jacob his blessing—even the promise of Israel's triumph over Edom.[1] But the craft whereby the mother and her younger son had wrested the blessing, was avenged upon both. For Esau too received a blessing—the promise that Israel's yoke would one day be broken,[2] and to avoid the vengeance of Esau Jacob had to leave his mother and his home for his kinsmen in distant Mesopotamia.

His dream at Bethel (28 : 10-22)

On the threshold of the discipline on which his life was now launched, the lonely man was graciously assured, in a vision, of the divine presence and of the nearness of heaven to earth. The God who had visited him even on that rugged and unexpected spot on the hillside of Bethel would—he was divinely assured—be with him and keep him wherever he went and would bring him back to the land he was leaving, in fulfilment of his high destiny. So he raised a memorial stone, where the shrine of Bethel now stands, and vowed a tithe to God, should he return in peace and safety.

(2) *Jacob's Fortunes in the Strange Land* (29 : 1 to 31 : 55)

Jacob reaches Mesopotamia, serves Laban, marries Leah and Rachel (29 : 1-30)

Forth then he went with hope and courage, and he was divinely guided to his eastern kinsmen. In return for the hand of the fair Rachel whom he loved, he offered Laban

[1] As in David's time (2 S. 8 : 14; 1 K. 11 : 15).

[2] As in the time of Joram (2 K. 8 : 20), about 845 B. C., and finally in the time of Ahaz (2 K. 16 : 6, corrected text) about 730 B. C.

seven years of service, but by a craft that matched and avenged his own, he was defrauded of his bride. The constant Jacob, however, shrank not from other seven years of service for the woman that he loved.

His children (29 : 31 to 30 : 21)

But while her sister bore him children, Rachel herself remained barren, and Sarah-like, sought children through her maid, and by other wrongful means.

Birth of Joseph (30 : 22-24)

At length after years of waiting God gave the barren Rachel a son, even Joseph. Thus by his wives and their maids, Jacob had eleven sons and one daughter.

Jacob's shepherd skill and prosperity (30 : 25-43)

Then Jacob longed to go back to his own country but his discipline was not yet complete. He must wait and serve yet more. At the entreaty of Laban, who marked the prosperity that Jacob had brought him, he remained, claiming a wage that seemed but trifling. But the wily Jacob outwitted the wily Aramean, and by craft and skill[1] became very rich and prosperous.

Departure from Mesopotamia (31 : 1-21)

His hour was come. Vexed by the jealousy of Laban, and still cherishing in his heart the old promise at Bethel, he was divinely moved to return to the land of his birth. Once more he outwitted his Aramean kinsman, and with wives and substance moved westward toward Gilead, Rachel taking with her the images her father used for divination.

Laban started in pursuit; but God intervened to save

[1] This is J. In 31 : 5-12 (E) his success is ascribed to God. Cf. Introduction, pp. 19, 20.

Laban's pursuit and Jacob's remonstrance (31 : 22-42)

Jacob from his revenge, and Laban did him no hurt. He was, however, indignant at the theft of his images, which he sought for in vain, being outwitted by the daughter whom years before he had defrauded of her rightful husband. Thus Laban was foiled at all points. Jacob remonstrated with Laban for his unjust requital of all his faithful service, overruled however and requited by the gracious God of his fathers.

Treaty between them (31 : 43-55)

Touched by his remonstrance, Laban proposed a covenant of friendship ; and there, between the two, a solemn covenant was made in Gilead, which was henceforth to be the boundary between the Israelites and the Arameans. Then Laban returned to his own land, and Jacob to his.

(3) *In the Promised Land* (32 : 1 to 35 : 22)

Angels meet Jacob (32 : 1, 2)

Now that he was in the promised land, he was strengthened, as at Bethel in the beginning, by a special sense of the divine presence.

Spectres of the past (32 : 3-23)

Nor was it unneeded. For danger was to be feared from the brother he had wronged, and with whom he must reckon. With his old caution he made his preparations ; then he humbly cast himself on God.

God wrestles with him (32 : 24-32)

The crisis of his life had come. In the lonely darkness, a divine hand grasped him ; God was wrestling with the wily patriarch who had so often wrestled with men and won. Besides his brother, he has now to reckon with that unseen unnameable One who grasps him in the dark and

who by a touch can wither all his power. Only then is he fit to possess the land, when he sees that it is not his craft that wins it, but his God who gives it. He clung to the God who wrestled with him till he won from him a blessing. The struggle left its mark, but it transformed and redeemed him.

The meeting of the brothers. Jacob at Shechem (33)

Strong now in humble confidence in God, he went forth to meet his brother, and his confidence was justified by his brother's magnanimous reception of him. He moved on to Shechem, and there by purchase won, in the promised land, ground he could legally call his own.[1]

Dishonoring of Dinah; strife with the natives (34)

Soon, however, came trouble. Shechem dishonored Jacob's daughter. But he loved her, and offered to pay for her any bridal price that might be imposed. The bargain was struck. Yet Simeon and Levi slew him, to avenge the purity of the family stained by union with an alien. Then Jacob reproved them for their imprudence in provoking the inhabitants of the land, to the possible destruction of him and his, and of all the hopes with them bound up.[2]

Back to Bethel (35 : 1-7)

Then Jacob was moved by a divine impulse to go to Bethel, the goal as the beginning of his pilgrimage, there to acknowledge the gracious God of all his way, having first cleansed his household of all symbols of superstition.

Soon gladness was turned to sorrow in the breaking of

[1] Cf. Josh. 24 : 32 (E), also Gen. 23 (P).

[2] More than half of this chapter comes from the priestly narrative.

Death of Deborah (35 : 8) and Rachel (35 : 16-22)

the oldest link that bound him to his past; and to the sorest sorrow of all, in the passing of his well-beloved Rachel, as she gave birth to Benjamin. Thus the circle of twelve was completed by a mother of sorrows.

4. *The Discipline of Joseph* (37 : 2 to 50 : 26)

(1) *His Sorrows* (37 : 2 to 40 : 23)

The dreamer and his fate; Joseph sold into Egypt (37 : 2-36)

Now Jacob loved Joseph above all his sons, and Joseph dreamed once and again of a greatness surpassing theirs. Jealous of the bold dreamer, his brethren cruelly conspired to slay him, and he was only saved by the word of the eldest-born, Reuben.[1] From his well-prison he was taken by Midianite merchants,[2] who sold him into Egypt. The way of the dreamer is hard; the hope of Israel was in an alien land—a slave.[3]

In prison (39)

Seeing the prosperity that crowned all Joseph's efforts, his Egyptian master trusted him with all he had. Then from a woman came fierce temptation, assailing him with pleading persistency. But he stood nobly firm,[4] supported by his horror of sin, and by his deep sense of honor

[1] In J it is Judah (v. 26).

[2] In J he is sold directly to Ishmaelites (v. 28).

[3] Chapter 38, which interrupts the story of Joseph, is interesting on historical and legal grounds. It relates how the three principal clans of Judah arose from an amalgamation of the tribe with the southern Canaanites; and it emphasizes the duty of marriage with a deceased brother's wife. Cf. Ruth 4 : 12.

[4] Unlike Judah (38).

and of God. Victim of cruel slander, he was thrust into prison. By so stern a way of sorrow does the dreamer move onward to his goal. For through it all, God was with him in the prison, lifting him to the post of honor—foretaste of his dream's fulfilment.

The opportunity; Joseph interprets two dreams (40)

In the prison [1] where Joseph was serving as slave to the governor, Pharaoh's chief butler and baker dreamed ominous dreams. Joseph, whose dark fortunes had not stained his faith in dreams—for his insight was a gift of God—interpreted their dreams, and begged the chief butler to speak kindly of him to Pharaoh, and procure his deliverance. The butler forgot, but God remembered; for this incident became the turning point in Joseph's fortunes.

(2) *His Exaltation* (41 to 50)

From prison to palace; Joseph ruler of Egypt (41)

It fell on this wise: Pharaoh dreamt dreams prophetic of a sore famine soon to fall on Egypt and the world. His wise men were baffled; but Joseph, whose power to interpret dreams was now, after two years of hope deferred, recalled by the man who had forgotten him, showed the meaning of the dreams, and offered counsel so wise that Pharaoh could not but see in him—slave though he was—a man endowed with the divine spirit and fit to be intrusted with the government of the land. He conferred upon him the highest honors, and gave him in marriage

[1] Ch. 40, which is, in the main, from E, is in reality rather parallel to than continuous with 39, which is, in the main, from J.

the daughter of the priest of Heliopolis, by whom he had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. When the famine came, his measures of prudence saved the people, and all the world was in his debt. So in the patient Joseph, often baffled but never broken, God at length fulfilled his purpose.

First visit of his brethren: their humiliation (42)

Now Jacob sent to Egypt all his sons for corn, all but his darling Benjamin. They appeared before Joseph and bowed before him, thus fulfilling his early dream. With a pretence of harshness he demanded the presence of Benjamin. In this their sorry plight, the guilty conscience of the men saw just retribution for the past. Back they went to their father, only to meet fresh trouble.

Second visit (43)

At length, as the famine grew sorer, the brothers returned to Joseph for more corn—this time with Benjamin, for whose safe return Judah promised the sorrowful Jacob to be surety. They were hospitably entertained by Joseph, Benjamin receiving special marks of favor ; and they could not help marvelling at his knowledge of them.

Troubles multiply and chasten (44)

Then he sent them away with corn and money, contriving however to have them brought back at once, with seeming guilt upon the head of Benjamin. They saw in their dismay the avenging hand of God. Sorrow and remorse had chastened them, and knit them closer in the bonds of love. They would not abandon their younger brother to his fate. But, when Joseph claimed him, Judah with passionate eloquence pled for him and offered himself as bondsman in his stead.

Convinced now that they were changed men, Joseph, to their terror and amazement, revealed himself, and asked after his father. He also sent him an invitation to Egypt, seconded by Pharaoh himself. Then he offered his now chastened brethren the embrace of reconciliation.

The reconciliation: Joseph's invitation (45 : 1-24)

The good news was at first almost too much for the old man; but his spirit revived and he said, "Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die."

The joy of Jacob (45 : 25-28)

So with the divine assurance that God would go with him, Jacob went down to Egypt, whence his descendants were to be brought back to the land of promise, after their long discipline, in accordance with the purpose of God. Thus Jacob and Joseph met at last.

The meeting of father and son (46 : 1-5, 28-34)

Joseph presented certain of his brethren to Pharaoh, and was careful to plan that they should dwell not among the Egyptians, but by themselves in Goshen.

The settlement in Egypt (47 : 1-6)

Now the famine waxed very sore; and while Jacob's household enjoyed the bounty of Joseph in Goshen, the Egyptians were reduced to great straits. But Joseph proved their saviour, and by famous statutes, he strengthened and enriched the royal house.

Joseph the saviour (47 : 12-27)

As the aged Jacob lay dying, he solemnly charged Joseph to bury him, not in Egypt, but beside his fathers in the promised land. Then upon Joseph's sons, first Ephraim the younger, then the elder, Manasseh, he bestowed his parting blessing, with the prayer that his own shepherd God would make them and their children true heirs

The dying Jacob blesses Joseph's sons (47 : 29 to 48 : 2, 8-22)

of the promises vouchsafed to his fathers ; and he assured Joseph that God would be with them and bring them back to the land of their fathers.

Funeral honors (50 : 1-14)

Then Jacob died, sore bewept ; and Joseph, with a great Egyptian escort, brought him to the land of Canaan, in accordance with his wish, and there he was buried with special honors.

Joseph fully forgives his brethren (50 : 15-21)

Now that their father was dead, the conscience-haunted brethren, fearing Joseph's vengeance, sought to make sure of his full forgiveness. The generous Joseph forgave them with tears. Who am I, he said, to punish? God had overruled their sin for the good of the world. He and they were but instruments in his hands.

Dying, he looks for another country (50 : 22-26)

Throughout his long life in Egypt, Joseph's heart was in the promised land ; and, as he lay dying, he gave solemn charge that his bones be brought thither, when the faithful God should lead his descendants back again, as he knew he surely would.[1]

VII

THE PROPHETIC NARRATIVE OF EXODUS 1 TO NUMBERS 32

Between Genesis and Exodus

Between the latest scene in Genesis and the opening scene in Exodus lies a great silence, broken only by the

[1] Cf. Josh. 24 : 32 (E).

sighing and the groans of the people whose ancestors had, generations before, been welcomed for Joseph's sake to the land of Egypt. Crushed and in a foreign land, they are learning the vicissitudes of life, that they may learn the grace and power of their God. In the background of their sorrow lies the promised land, a dear memory and a forlorn hope. Yet back to that land they must be brought; for it is there, after the discipline of Egypt, that they will do the work for the world which God has given them to do.

Moses the deliverer

So, in his own wondrous way, God raises up Moses, a truly gigantic figure; next to our Lord, perhaps the most important personality in the history of religion. Here again we see the sort of man whom God calls to conspicuous service. The first real glimpse we get of him is as a man with a mighty passion for justice, and not afraid to deal a sturdy blow in its defence; a man with a deep brotherly heart, knightly champion of the weak and downtrodden, and willing to face heavy odds (Ex. 2 : 11-22). His impetuosity only needs to be tempered, and it is tempered in the lonely desert. There, in meditation, he gathers a quiet strength. His quick eye sees great sights and sees God behind them; his sensitive ear hears the divine call to deliver his people. The God of Abraham is not dead; he is the God of the bush. He is here and now, sanctifying the spot where Moses is standing. Here then is the revelation in the strength of which he may well go

forward to his tremendous task—the revelation that God is ever the same, and that same a God of grace; as he was with Abraham, so he would be with him; as he loved the fathers in the old days, so he loved the children in these, and, loving, would deliver them. Hesitating, as well he might, before such a task, but reassured, he advances to meet the mighty Pharaoh, arch-enemy of his people.

Moses and Pharaoh: a royal encounter

Nothing could be grander than this series of encounters between these two mighty men. But the blending of the documents has sometimes obscured the real splendor of the climax. According to the Jehovist, Moses predicts the punishment which will befall, if Pharaoh refuses his request; and next day, Jehovah sends it. According to the Elohist, Moses works the wonders by raising his magic rod. Of the ten plagues, the Jehovist records seven; the turning of the Nile into blood, the frogs, the gadflies, the murrain, the hail, the locusts, and the slaying of the first-born. The Elohist records five: the turning of the Nile into blood, the hail, the locusts, the darkness, and smiting of the first-born. The real progress of the encounter is most impressively seen in the Jehovist, but in all that is essential both accounts agree.

The rising terrors

The magnificence of this struggle, and the titanic courage of Moses are not clearly seen till we look well at the combatants and their resources; Moses strong in God and in the naked justice of his cause, Pharaoh the incarnation of a might at which even to-day men marvel. Think

of Egypt's colossal statuary, palaces, temples, tombs; it is the monarch of such a land that Moses defies. The foemen are well matched. Moses never yields an inch of ground and Pharaoh yields but little. But it is a struggle of right against might, of the unseen with the seen, and the unseen must prevail. The plagues grow more awful; the terrors heighten; they wring from the haughty Pharaoh both entreaty and confession, and even win from some of his court an acknowledgment of Jehovah's power. But at last, in a climax of extraordinary magnificence Pharaoh rises like a giant, refuses the demand of Moses, and forbids him, on pain of death, to look upon his face any more. Moses takes him at his word and leaves him with a flush of anger on his face, after announcing the most terrible blow of all.[1]

Deliverance at last

The blow falls. God's will is at length done, and his redeemed people go forth triumphantly; soon however to meet new perplexities, with the Red Sea in front and the all but invincible Pharaoh behind them. Here again, however, God wrought for them a deliverance, the memory of which touched the national imagination, and rekindled faith so long as Israel remained a people. Out of their perplexity they emerge with a ringing song of triumph and gratitude upon their lips.

The covenant

But soon the note changes to one of murmuring, for a new perplexity looms up (Ex. 17). This people is not yet

[1] 11 : 1-3 from E, unfortunately interrupts this fine passage (J).

fit for the promised land; they will need discipline of divers sorts. Still, they are the people elect, and when they reach the holy mountain, God enters into a covenant with them. Amid scenes at once sublime and severe, as though nature were in sympathy with the awfulness of the moment, Jehovah revealed his will, claimed them in that moment for his own peculiar people on condition of their obedience to that will, and started them thereby on their distinctive national career. The writers of Exodus 19 and 20 felt this to be the critical moment in Israel's early history. They dwell upon it with a copiousness of detail and with an emphasis which shows how fully they felt the moral obligations which covenant with such a God as Jehovah imposed, and how admirably the religion founded by Moses was adapted to be a world religion.

Fall and forgiveness

Again, however, the people plunge from the heights to the depths. The solemn ratification of the covenant is dramatically followed by the idolatrous worship of the golden calf—a crime almost too heinous under the circumstances to pardon. But if it may be pardoned at all, it will be through the intercession of Moses (Ex. 32 : 1 to 34 : 10). Here again the greatness of the climax in the intercession scene is obscured by the blending of the sources,[1] but in both, especially in the Jehovist, it is worked out with rare power and beauty. The unwearied persistency of Moses is at length rewarded with the revelation that the

[1] Read together 33 : 1-3, 12-23; 34 : 6-9 (J).

glory of God is his pity; and with the swift intuition of love, he urges this as a plea for the pardon of the guilty people. True to his nature, God pardons and restores.

The uniqueness of Moses

Forgiven, they leave the holy mountain, only to set out upon a new career of murmuring (Num. 11). Every new scene heightens the loneliness of Moses—reproached by the people, vexed by his jealous brother and sister (Num. 12). But it all serves only to show how absolutely unique he is in his prophetic dignity (12 : 8) and in how intimate a sense he is the friend of God.

The unbelief of the people

With hope undimmed by all this unbelief, he sent spies into the land of promise. On their return, they dishearten the too easily disheartened people. The cup is now full. This is not the generation which can look upon the land; their bones will bleach the wilderness.

Rebellion

The darkness deepens. A rebellion is set on foot against the authority of Moses. But from this crisis, as from every crisis, he emerges with the divine approval upon him and his work (Num. 16).

Near the promised land

At length Edom is reached, and the promised land is not far away. But Edom, despite the ancient kinship, refuses help to Israel, who, in bitter vexation, and railing against God and Moses, find themselves compelled to take a circuitous route. In the end, however, they reach the Arnon, defeat and dispossess the mighty Sihon, King of the Amorites, perhaps also Og, King of Bashan. The

land is near, and the fulfilment of the promise is within sight.

The prophecies of Balaam

With great dramatic propriety, the prophecies of Balaam appear at this point. Israel's power has been felt, something of her strange history is known, and Moab is afraid of her. The king summons a seer to curse her with a potent curse. But who can curse whom God hath blessed? There—just before she sets foot on the promised land—from the lips of a stranger falls the prediction of her glorious and invincible destiny.

The sad reality

But the vision melts before the facts. The dramatic prophecy has a dramatic sequel. The people fall before the seductions of Moabite idolatry—fall too after a discipline and a success in which even alien eyes like Balaam's can see the hand of a God that has no peer. When that sin has been punished, possession of the land begins, the ground east of the Jordan being the first to be settled.

The personality of Moses

Israel is now launched upon her national career, a career which the later books of the Old Testament regard as a divine mission to the world. But under God, she owes everything to Moses. He must indeed have been a most impressive and powerful personality, who brought those down-trodden slaves of Egypt to something like a national self-consciousness, by giving them an inspiring conception of the God whom they nominally served. Little wonder that he haunted Hebrew imagination for more than a millennium, that earlier ages placed his name

alongside that of God,[1] or that later ages unreservedly ascribed to him the laws which were their life.

VIII

THE BIRTH OF THE NATION (Ex. 1 to Num. 32)

1. *Redemption from the Bondage of Egypt* (Ex. 1 : 6 to 15 : 21)

(1) *The Preparation* (1 : 6 to 4 : 31)

Israel cruelly oppressed (1 : 6-12, 15-22)

Long years after, when Israel had grown to be many and strong, a new dynasty arose over Egypt, which sought to crush under cruel burdens the people of whom it was jealous. But to the amazement of the Egyptians the people grew all the more, for God prospers his own. Then the ruthless king ordered the slaughter of all the male children ; but again his cruelty was overruled.

A deliverer raised up in Moses (2 : 1-23[a])

For the infant Moses, hidden by his parents in fear, yet in faith, was found and taken to the court, there to be trained as a prince. Thus strangely did God prepare and equip him who was to be the saviour of his people. The glamor of the court did not blind him to the sorrows of his brethren. Twice did he show himself the doughty champion of the oppressed—he who hated wrong in friend or foe—and had to seek refuge with the kindred[2] clan of

[1] Cf. Ex. 14 : 31 ; 19 : 9 ; Num. 21 : 5. [2] Cf. Gen. 25 : 2.

Midian, where the silence of the desert would temper the impulses of his hot heart. Here again he is seen as the champion of the oppressed.[1]

God's revelation of himself to Moses, and the call to service (3)

To the pensive lonely shepherd by Horeb[2] came a message of God in the form of a flaming bush—flaming but unconsumed. At first it was to him nothing but a strange sight; but soon he found it to be the vision and the voice of God, and the barren desolate place on which he was standing to be holy ground. The present God in the flaming bush was the old God of the patriarchs, who in the many dark days of oppression had seemed so far away; but all the time he had seen their sorrow and heard their cry, and here he was now, as ever, present and mighty to deliver and to bring his banished into the promised land. But he delivers through the man he has chosen and equipped by discipline of court and desert: "Come and I will send *thee*." So came the divine word to Moses's heart. Lonely brooding has tempered the old self-reliance. How could he, a crushed and exiled man, face Pharaoh[3] and bring the people out? Then came the di-

[1] After this appears to come in J's story, the strange passage 4 : 24-26 which implies that on the death of the king from whom he fled, Moses set out to return, and on the way his life, which was in danger from the wrath of Jehovah, was redeemed by the offering of the blood of circumcision. The rite of infant circumcision is thus explained. This scene would be followed by the commission in ch. 3 (so Bacon).

[2] Called Horeb in E and D (Deuteronomy), Sinai in J and P.

[3] In J he is to go with the elders (16-18).

vine assurance, supported by a sign, that God would be with him. But in what character will he present the ancestral God to his incredulous people? As Jehovah, whose faithfulness is constant, in future as in past. This is to be his abiding name. Supported by the revelation of the constancy of the divine pity, Moses is inspired to demand from Pharaoh permission for the people to make a three days' pilgrimage into the wilderness to worship their own God, despite his assurance that Pharaoh will refuse until he is compelled by Jehovah's wonders to consent.

Divinely equipped, yet hesitating (4 : 1-23, 27-31)

To silence all popular doubts as to his divine commission, he was empowered to perform three miraculous signs.[1] Nevertheless his own faith was not thereby strengthened. Conscious of his weakness, he still shrank from his God-appointed task, to which even the clear assurance of almighty God did not brace him. So half in grace and half in chastisement, God gave him a helper in Aaron, his brother.

(2) *The Struggle* (5 : 1 to 12 : 39)

Moses and Pharaoh; the meeting of two great wills (5 : 1 to 6 : 1)

The great struggle began: Moses on the one hand, championing the cause of Jehovah and the oppressed; and on the other Pharaoh, the cruel, defiant, godless. The religious plea urged by Moses was rejected by Pharaoh as a lying pretext to secure a holiday, and answered

[1] In 1-9 (J) the miracles are to convince the people, cf. 29-31. In E (cf. 17) they are to be performed before Pharaoh.

by imposing upon the people heavier burdens, which embittered the Hebrew overseers against Moses. The baffled leader laid the matter before God, and again won from him the assurance of ultimate deliverance, to be wrought by his own strong hand.

The Nile turned into blood (7 : 14-18, 20, 21, 23-25)

Jehovah was resolved [1] to bend Pharaoh to his will, and teach him who he was.[2] So he summoned the forces of nature, of which he was lord, and not the gods of Egypt; and began by corrupting the Nile, source of Egypt's life. But Pharaoh remained unimpressed.

Plague of frogs (8 : 1-4, 8-15)

Then he sent a plague of frogs. This blow moved the proud monarch to entreat Moses to intercede for him, and Jehovah answered Moses's prayer. But the respite only hardened Pharaoh's stubborn heart.

Plague of gadflies (8 : 20-32)

Then he sent a plague of gadflies which tormented Egypt but spared Goshen where Israel was—sure proof that Jehovah was lord of all. The exasperated Pharaoh then met Moses's demand half-way; but Moses was inflexible. Grudgingly did Pharaoh make the concession demanded, and the plague was removed by the prayer of Moses at Pharaoh's entreaty. But the respite only hardened Pharaoh's stubborn heart, and he did not let the people go.

Plague of murrain (9 : 1-7)

Then he sent a plague which slew the cattle of Egypt,

[1] This paraphrase preserves only the bare outline of the story of the plagues. For the characteristic differences in the representations of J and E, see page 54.

[2] Cf. 5 : 2.

but spared that of Israel. Yet this, too, but hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people go.

The divine patience had dealt with him in vain, and death was his desert. But Jehovah, to show upon him his glorious omnipotence, sent another plague—this time of very grievous hail—which spared Goshen where Israel was, but ruined the property of all in Egypt, all but the courtiers who feared Israel's God. Pharaoh, awed, confessed his sin against Jehovah, and the plague was removed by the prayer of Moses at Pharaoh's entreaty. But the respite only hardened the faithless king's stubborn heart and he did not let the people go.

Plague of hail (9 : 13-35)

Then Moses threatened another plague so grievous that Pharaoh, yielding to the passionate remonstrance of his courtiers, gave the men leave to go, but with insolent blasphemy refused leave to the women and children, and backed his refusal by violence. So the blow had to fall. It came as a deadly plague of locusts. In haste Pharaoh summoned Moses and confessed his sin, and the plague was removed on his earnest entreaty by the prayer of Moses. But the respite again only hardened his heart, and he did not let the people go.

Plague of locusts (10 : 1-20)

A severer blow was needed. It came as fierce sandstorms that for three days darkened all the land except where Israel was. Pharaoh was moved to offer a compromise, but the inflexible Moses would tolerate none. Whereupon the infatuated Pharaoh passionately ordered

Plague of darkness : last doom announced (10 : 21-29 ; 11 : 4-8)

him to leave his presence on pain of death.[1] Moses took him at his word; but ere he went, he announced in the name of Israel's God the last and sorest plague—that all the first-born of Egypt, and of Egypt only, would die. "After that," said he, "I will go out," and he left the presence of Pharaoh in hot anger.

Death of the first-born. The Exodus (12 : 29-39)

Jehovah kept his dread word. All the first-born of Egypt died, and Pharaoh had at the last to yield in every point; yea, his people were even urgent upon Israel to leave. So in haste and laden with Egyptian treasure, they left the land of bondage.

(3) *The Deliverance* (13 : 17 to 15 : 21)

Israel departs in faith (13 : 17-22)

The divine discipline of Israel demanded that they should not go by the most direct way to the promised land. Filled however with Joseph's faith[2] that they would one day reach it, Moses took Joseph's bones with him, and their God was their guide by night and by day.

The memorable deliverance at the Red Sea (14 : 5-31)

When it became clear that Israel had gone for good and not merely to hold their sacred festival, the yet unchastened Pharaoh started in pursuit with his chariots of war.[3] In splendid isolation Moses rebuked the faithless terror of his people, with the calm assurance that their God would deliver them that day once for all. And de-

[1] 11 : 1-3 are misplaced. 11 : 4-8 form a magnificent climax to 10 : 29.
[2] Cf. Gen. 50 : 25.
[3] The priestly historian contributes a few verses, *e.g.*, 8, 15-18, 22, 23, 29.

liver he did, so that even the Egyptians, panic-stricken, were constrained to admit his presence and mysterious power. One and all were overwhelmed. There lay the corpses dead upon the shore—a deliverance for Israel never to be forgotten. Their flickering faith was kindled by sight; they believed in God whom they had doubted, and in his servant Moses whom they had upbraided.

Moses sang a song of victory, whereto Miriam and the women raised in response another song. The song of triumph (15 : 1-21)

2. *The Covenant* (Ex. 15 : 22 to 34 : 9)

(1) *The March to Sinai* (15 : 22 to 17 : 16)

Forth then the people went, from triumph to disappointment, from praise to murmuring; for their faith would not bear the sore strain of the way. Moses, still with faith unshaken, cried to God; and once and again God supplied their needs and saved them. Departure from the Red Sea. Want of bread and water (15 : 22-27; 16 : 4, 19-21, 35; 17 : 1-7)

He saved them too in war: for he proved their banner and confidence, when assailed by Amalek the hateful, doomed to destruction for this their ancient enmity to Israel. War with Amalek (17 : 8-16)

(2) *The Covenant at Sinai* (19 : 2b to 24 : 16)

The arrival at Sinai marked a crisis. For it was there that the ever-memorable covenant was made: God, on the one hand, promising through his servant Moses, to continue to Israel, on condition of obedience, the grace he had The covenant: (a) its nature (19 : 2b-9)

manifested in the exodus, and to make them his elect people; and on the other hand the people, pledging themselves to obedience. By the revelation given to Moses in the cloud, he was to become for all time the accredited messenger of Jehovah.

(b) Its solemn accompaniments (19: 10-19)

For so supreme a moment all must reverently and solemnly prepare. At last in trumpet blasts of thunder, in lightnings and black storm-clouds, Jehovah made his presence known; and to those divine accompaniments, these divine words were given,[1] words[2] which reveal the

(c) Its moral obligations (20: 1-17)

nature of Jehovah's claims upon his covenant people, and base these claims upon that redemptive grace enjoyed by Israel in the deliverance from Egypt. "I am Jehovah thy God who showed thee my love and might by bringing thee out of the bondage of Egypt. Therefore:

"Thou shalt have no other gods beside me;

"Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image;

"Thou shalt not utter the name of Jehovah thy God for a vain cause;

"Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it;

"Honor thy father and thy mother;

"Thou shalt do no murder;

[1] 19; 20-25; 24: 1, 2, 9-11 (J) represent another version of the story, according to which Moses went up, accompanied by priests and elders. The Septuagint tones down the anthropomorphism of 24: 10, and Dt. 4: 12, 15 with its later and more spiritual view of God, corrects this more primitive representation.

[2] What follows is from E. The J covenant of ten words is in 34: 10-28.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery;
"Thou shalt not steal;
"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor;
"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house." [1]

These divine words were inscribed on tablets of stone. Inscribed on stone (24 : 12-14; 31 : 18b)

To the commandments comprising Jehovah's covenant, the people unitedly promised implicit obedience, and the covenant was sealed with the blood of sacrifice. Sealed with blood (24 : 3-8)

(3) *The Breach and Restoration* (32 : 1 to 34 : 9)

While Moses was on the mount, receiving a further revelation from God, the perplexed people, being without their leader and thus without any visible proof of the presence of their God, made an image of him in the form of a wooden calf overlaid with gold.[2] On the return of Moses, his astonishment at their unspiritual worship rose to indignation. He at once destroyed the calf and punished the people. Then he went back to the mount and laid before God their grievous sin in worshipping him by an image, pleading for them with an exquisitely tender and unselfish passion. But God, in his displeasure, threatened

Breach of the covenant: the people forgiven on Moses's intercession (32, 33 : 1-6, 12-23; 34 : 1-9)

[1] Vv. 18-21 form the introduction to the legislation known as the Book of the Covenant, extending to 23 : 33.

[2] E represents Aaron as the abettor of the image-worship (32 : 1-6) which in J (25-29) is avenged by the Levites, who are therefore rewarded with the priesthood. V. 26 perhaps suggests a different cause for the disorder. It implies apostasy from Jehovah; the incident involves only the worship of him by images.

to abandon the people, promising however his special favor to Moses. Emboldened by this promise, Moses pled again —were they not Jehovah's own covenant people?—and won the promise of his presence. Thus emboldened, he prayed for a fuller vision of the divine nature, and this again was granted—so far at least as might be; for no living man can fully know that nature; he can only look after the divine glory as it passes before him and meditate thereon. So there, in the loneliness of the mount, God revealed to him the glory of his nature as a God of pity and abounding grace, ready to pardon. In grateful reverence, Moses prostrated himself and besought that that grace which is the glory of God, might be bestowed upon the erring people: "Pardon our sin and take us for thine inheritance."

The tent of meeting (33 : 7-11)

(So Jehovah forgave them fully, and sealed the forgiveness by revealing to Moses how the people were henceforth to worship him, and what manner of tent he was to have.) Now this tent to which the people resorted to learn the will of God, was regularly pitched at a distance from the camp; and there God would speak to Moses, face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

Jethro's visit; Moses aided in his judicial functions (18)

Before Israel left the holy mountain, Jethro,[1] hearing of their now famous deliverance from Egypt, came to see Moses, and overjoyed to hear the thrilling tale again from his own lips he, alien though he was, confessed that

[1] Cf. Ex. 3 : 1.

Israel's God was greater than all gods. But it vexed him to see how the great leader was worn, as he listened all day to the people who came to learn through him the will of God and gave them those decisions on which the divine fabric of Israel's law was reared. So on the advice of Jethro the people were organized, and over each division honest and God-fearing men were appointed to decide on all matters of lesser moment, while the graver cases were still reserved for Moses.

3. *From Sinai to Moab* (Num. 10 : 29 to 32 : 42)

(1) *Incidents of the Wandering* (10 : 29 to 21 : 35)

Departure from Sinai (Num. 10 : 29-36)

Jethro, whose aid as a guide through the wilderness was sure to be invaluable, consented,[1] at the entreaty of Moses, to accompany Israel on the march, and received in return the assurance of a portion in the promised land. Forward then they set, with their God in his ark going on before. When they marched, he was invoked to give them the victory over every foe; and when they rested, he was invoked to rest among them to protect and bless.[2]

Murmuring (11 : 1-3)

The people murmured[3] against their gracious God; and when in his righteous anger he chastised them, Moses interceded and God answered his prayer.

[1] As we are obliged to infer from Jud. 1 : 16 and 4 : 11.

[2] The words of invocation are in poetry which must be old; they represent the early conception of Jehovah.

[3] For bread? Cf. Ps. 78 : 20.

Prayer for flesh, and its results (11 : 4-15, 18-23, 31-35)

Tired of the monotonous manna and pining for the flesh meat of Egypt, the people provoked the anger of Moses and their God. The lonely leader, weary of their importunacy, asked God in mercy to take away his life. God answered by revealing to him his purpose toward the ungrateful people. As they had rejected his wise leading, he would teach them their folly by granting them the desires of their heart. Even the deep faith of Moses might not see how; but God's hand is not shortened, for he is lord of all. So he sent a wind which drove such swarms of quails about the camp, that the people gathered abundance; and many of those that had surfeited died. Thus was the divine word fulfilled.

Seventy elders divinely equipped to aid Moses (11 : 16, 17, 24, 25)

In pity for Moses, who was overstrained by the burden of governing the people alone, God put a spirit like his own into the heart of seventy of the elders, so that they were one with him in work and aim; and the prophetic enthusiasm came upon them.[1]

The great leader's magnanimity (11 : 26-30)

The spirit came also upon two young men who had not gone with the others to the tent where Moses was; for the spirit of God is not bound to any place. Joshua urged Moses to forbid them to prophesy, but he nobly refused. The gift of the spirit, he said, needed not to be mediated through him; his heart's desire was that God would put his spirit upon the people one and all.

Miriam, seconded by Aaron, took occasion to assert

[1] This may be a duplicate of the story in Ex. 18.

their equality with Moses as prophets of God. At once God intervened in behalf of his great and faithful servant, whom he was wont to honor above other prophets by speaking with him face to face. Miriam's pride he punished with leprosy; but the merciful Moses, on Aaron's confession and intercession, cried to God, who healed her after she had borne her shame.

The prophetic dignity of Moses vindicated (12 : 1-16)

Before the assault on Canaan, Moses sent Caleb and others from Kadesh to the southern region to report on the nature of the land and the people. They went as far as Hebron, and brought back a huge cluster of grapes and other fruit, as specimens of the wealth of the land. But they so discouraged the people by their account of the strength and stature[1] of the inhabitants that in their despair they proposed to appoint a leader to undo all that Moses had done, and bring them back to Egypt. Caleb, however, reassured them. They might go fearlessly forward, he said, to the attack, if only they would obey the voice of their God.

The report of the spies and its effect upon the people (13 : 17b-33; 14 : 1, 3, 4, 8, 9)

Moses, dreading that Jehovah would disinherit the people for their unbelief, pled for them. Would not the peoples of Egypt and Canaan think lightly of Jehovah? Would they not say that, mighty as he had shown himself to be, he was not mighty enough to carry out his purpose for his people, and had slain them in despair? "Show but the pity," he prayed, "and the pardoning grace thou

The penalty of unbelief (14 : 11-45)[2]

[1] 13 : 21, 25 are from P.

[2] Except 26-30, 34-38, which belong to P.

didst reveal to me,[1] and that thou hast ever shown thy people heretofore." God heard and stayed his anger. Yet the sin of unbelief could not go unpunished; God must be glorified. So that whole generation—all but believing Caleb—was doomed never to see the promised land. Reckless of the words of Moses, which were all too surely words of God, and fondly imagining that confession could avert the doom, they presumptuously advanced northward to attack the people of the land; but they were beaten, for neither their God nor their leader went with them.[2]

Rebellion of Dathan and Abiram: authority of Moses divinely vindicated (16)[3]

Two distinguished Reubenites, Dathan and Abiram, repining at their present hardships, for which they held Moses responsible, and resenting his authority, though it had never been wrongfully exercised, rebelled. On their haughtily rejecting his summons, he himself went to them with the elders, and warned the people of the danger of contact with them; for the fearful sin of rebellion against a leader sent and attested by God, was rebellion against God himself and would be fearfully punished by him. His words found strange and instant fulfilment. By a wondrous visitation, which struck all Israel with terror, God destroyed the rebels with all that was theirs, and thus justified Moses as Israel's true and only leader.

[1] Cf. Ex. 34 : 6.

[2] E. Cf. J's story in 21 : 1-3 which adds that afterward, on vowing to devote the Canaanite cities to Jehovah, they won a victory.

[3] Most of this chapter belongs to P. Besides isolated verses, JE has at least 13-15 and 28-31.

The gift of water (20 : 1-13).[1]

(After a sojourn of well nigh forty years in the wilderness about Kadesh) Moses, seeking the nearest way to the promised land, sent to the Edomites for permission to pass quietly through their territory, appealing to their common ancestry,[2] and recounting the sorrows of their sojourn in Egypt, and Jehovah's gracious deliverance of them. Haughtily and with threats of violence Edom refused, once and yet again.

Edom's refusal of permission to pass through her land (20 : 14-21)

Sore at heart, Israel turned to go round the land of Edom, fretting against God and Moses. So in chastisement he sent among them serpents, whose bite caused burning and death. Then the penitent people besought Moses to intercede for them, and God heard his prayer, making the deadly things harmless for all who looked up to him in trust.

The murmurers punished; the penitent restored (21 : 4-11)

Then Israel turned north and reached the Arnon, "Moab's frontier," as the old war-song has it. Hence they sent to Sihon, King of the Amorites, who had lately swept across Moab with the fire of war — resistless even to Moab's god—asking for permission to pass quietly through his land. He replied with a challenge to battle, in which Israel vanquished him, occupying his land and capital.

Conquest of Sihon's land (21 : 12-15, 21-32)

[1] At least half of this difficult section belongs to P. The rest appears to be J's parallel (cf. 21 : 16-20) to the story which E sets at the beginning of the wanderings (Ex. 17 : 1-7).

[2] As descendants of Jacob (Gen. 27). Esau was regarded as the father of the Edomites.

The memory of this great victory was maintained in a stinging song.[1]

Song of the well (21 : 16-20)

Not far from thence, by the grace of God, a well was dug, to which the princes also lent a helping hand ; and the gladness and brotherhood of that hour were cherished in song. At last Israel reached the glen by Pisgah, from whose top the promised land could all be seen.

(2) *Prophecy, Tragedy and Triumph* (22 to 32)

Balak sends for Balaam to curse Israel (22)

In terror of Israel, whose power had now been proved, Balak, King of Moab, sought to enlist the aid of the famous soothsayer Balaam in cursing Israel ; for the curse of such a one is mighty. Conscious that he must fulfil the will of God, yet allured by Balak's promise of honor and treasure, Balaam went. Thrice his way was blocked ; and thrice he rode blindly against the heavenly monitor which even his ass could see. Then his eyes were opened to the folly of his journey. He now saw that it was God who had blocked his way, and he made to turn back. But no ! Jehovah had a purpose to be fulfilled through him, and on he must now go—he, an alien, to declare God's glorious word of triumph for Israel over all her heathen foes.

After the customary rites, he, from a height whence he saw the people, foretold in prophetic ecstasy their unique

[1] The section 33-35, relating Israel's decisive victory over Og, King of Bashan, is possibly later.

and glorious destiny. Balak, true heathen, hoping that the divine word might change with change of place, led Balaam to another height, and again in ecstatic mood, he sang of Israel's coming triumph over her foes, over heartless Edom and jealous Moab.[1] Thus ere they crossed to the promised land, Israel's high hopes of splendid destiny were justified and rekindled by Jehovah's words upon alien and unwilling lips.

Instead he foretells her splendid destiny (23 : 1 to 24 : 19, and v. 25)

Soon this fair ideal melted before the sad and shameless reality. The fickle people joined themselves to the women of Moab, and therewith to the sensual worship of Moab's god. Jealous of the honor of Israel's forsaken God, Moses commanded all the apostates to be slain.

Israel yields to Moabite idolatry (25 : 1-5)

Gilead, east of the Jordan, was a fine pasture-land; and the tribes of Gad and Reuben asked leave from Moses to stay on the east side, as they had much cattle. Moses refused. As the cause was one, he urged, even Jehovah's, so the people must be one: there must be no thought of separation till the land was subdued. To imperil the unity was to court disaster, like that which overtook the faithless generation that trusted in the spies' report; "be sure your sin will find you out."[2] But he gave them leave to settle

Gad, Reuben and Manasseh settle east of the Jordan (32)[2]

[1] Of the two pairs of poems, which are parallel rather than continuous, the first pair (23) belongs in the main to E, the second (24) to J. The section 24 : 20-24 ("he sang, too, of the doom of the Amalekite, the Kenite, and the Assyrian") is a later addition. These three oracles, with the four preceding, bring the total up to the sacred number seven.

[2] Certain verses of this chapter are due to P: cf. 18, 19, 28-30 and others.

their flocks and families on the east side, on condition that they would cross with the rest and fight the battles of Jehovah. So the families of Gad and Reuben settled, and the warriors fought. Gradually the rest of the east country was won and settled by three clans of Manasseh.[1]

IX

RULING IDEAS OF THE PROPHETIC HISTORY

Religious significance of the history

The brief sketch of the history attempted in chapters iv. and vii. has made it clear that the value of those narratives is not exclusively and perhaps not even primarily historical. The times with which they deal lie too far behind the written record for any accurate historical knowledge, in the strict sense of the word historical, to be possible. Indeed, the narratives by their form, confess as much; they deal with only salient facts, which illustrate the divine purpose. Every one must feel how thin is the historical thread in the story of Isaac; much, if not most of what is recorded of him is but a duplicate of the experience of his greater father.[2] Nevertheless, his life advances and illus-

[1] Cf. Josh. 17 : 1 where Manasseh got his land because he could fight for it.

[2] Gen. 26 : 6-11 and 26-33. In point of fact, it would seem as if the Isaac stories were, in some cases, the original, and the corresponding Abraham stories the more imposing duplicates.

trates the divine purpose. The history is not written for its own sake, but as the vehicle of great religious ideas. In other words, it is written in the prophetic spirit, and by men to whom ideas meant more than facts. The Jews include the historical books from Joshua to Kings among the prophets, rightly feeling that the history is but an exhibition of the principles on which the prophets based their teachings. Such, too, is the history with which we have been dealing. Gleaming through the gray tradition are bright and indisputable facts which historically cohere, and are of high historical value; but of more value than the facts are the divine ideas which they suggest and partially illustrate. This is obvious in such a story as that of Abraham's call to sacrifice Isaac. Besides being a splendid illustration of Abraham's obedience to a voice which he believes to be divine, it has also the didactic significance of setting the divine disapproval upon human sacrifice.

Redemption is effected through an elect nation

Let us look then briefly at the master thoughts of the prophetic narrative. Fundamental to the whole history is the idea of redemption. The words of Moses to his baffled people at the Red Sea would be a fit motto for the whole Bible: "Stand still and see the salvation of Jehovah" (Ex. 14 : 13). The world is sunk in sin, and needs salvation. That is the great and ever-present fact of human life which the early chapters of Genesis resolutely face and with which they boldly grapple. The sin is sometimes hideous, as in Sodom; but, hideous or not, it

is always there, provoking God not only to anger but also to redemptive thoughts. For were there no redemption, the divine purpose in creating man would be wholly frustrated, and that must not be.[1] Out of all mankind, a special people is elected to be the object of his special care. This is the fact; but it is not till the exile that the reason of it is clearly felt—that Israel's privilege is meant to benefit and bless the world. It is not felt by the prophetic writers of the Hexateuch.[2] The wider destiny of Israel's religion is indeed suggested more than once,[3] and is implicit in its very nature, but it is not a burning fact—at once an inspiration and a consolation—as it was to Deutero-Isaiah.[4] It is the privilege rather than the duties of election that interest the prophetic writers of the Hexateuch. They are proud of Israel's uniqueness and isolation, so obvious in the immunity she enjoyed during the plagues of Egypt, so startling as to appeal to the eyes of an unprejudiced stranger.[5]

Elect men

But within the elect nation stand elect men, through whom the divine work is to be begun and continued. The religious genius of Israel as a people must be ac-

[1] Moses is sometimes represented as using this argument effectually within the narrower sphere of Israel's election: cf. Num. 14 : 11-20.

[2] Not, *e.g.*, in Gen. 12 : 3, which means no more than that Abraham's blessing is to be a model blessing.

[3] Cf. Num. 14 : 21; and more explicitly in the late verses Ex. 19 : 5, 6.

[4] Cf. Messages of the Later Prophets in this series, pp. 180-193.

[5] Num. 23 : 9, cf. Ex. 33 : 16.

knowledged when we look at the heroes whom she admires, for they are men after God's own heart: men of deep and ready faith like Abraham, whose faith God counted for righteousness; men of purity like Joseph, who could not "do this great wickedness and sin against God;" men of stern justice like Moses; men who could plead with God in prayer and prevail; men who would give up their dearest at God's command; men of sensitive conscience, who felt that of the least of God's mercies they were unworthy; men who could endure as seeing the Unseen.[1]

God is righteous, merciful, and omnipotent

Such were the instruments whom God chose to effect his purpose. Let us look at the God who chose them. He is, first and foremost, a moral God: his choice of such men alone would prove that. He hates sin with a perfect hatred. He would rather see his fair world desolated by a flood than peopled by men, the thoughts of whose hearts were only evil continually. An exceptionally wicked city he will burn up with fire from heaven. His law is, before all things, a moral law (Ex. 20), obedience to which means national and individual welfare. His commandments are not hard, for they are reasonable, and the motive to obedience is love. How could the people refuse to obey the commands of a God, who, ere he commands, graciously calls to mind that it was he who brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slaves? (Ex. 20 : 2). Surely his yoke is easy and his burden is

[1] Heb. 11 : 27.

light. Mercy is his nature no less than justice. It is of his grace that he saves Noah (Gen. 6 : 8), and not only because Noah was a righteous man (7 : 1). It is "through the mercy of Jehovah toward him" that Lot is delivered from the doomed city (Gen. 19 : 16). Even upon Sodom he pronounces no inexorable doom; he will not destroy it for ten's sake. Now this grace of God receives its most powerful manifestation in the Exodus. It was, in one aspect, pity for the victims of cruelty and persecution that caused him so mightily to intervene.

Mightily—for he has the resources of the Creator,[1] and uses them to accomplish his purpose,[2] whether it be to equip a poor speaker with the power he needs,[3] to blot out a wicked world,[4] or to redeem his people from thraldom. By his wondrous and terrible plagues in Egypt he proved that he was lord of nature—he and not the gods of the land; even father Nile had to do his bidding. It was much to prove that in Egypt; for to the ancient mind a god was but the god of his own land. Therein lies the thrilling interest of the drama that is enacted in Egypt, and the tragic horror of it to the Egyptians. A strange God has stretched his hand over their land, and shown himself mightier than their gods. They have to confess that Moses was right when he said: "There is none like Jehovah our God."[5] How powerful and profound then be-

[1] Ex. 9 : 29. [2] Num. 11 : 23. [3] Ex. 4 : 10-12.
[4] Gen. 6 to 8. [5] Ex. 8 : 10.

come the simple words "*Jehovah* rained on all the land of *Egypt!*"[1] True, Jehovah is the God of the Hebrews;[2] yet the land[3] is his. It is this fact of God's mighty power that imparts such content and stimulus to the promise, "I will be with thee."[4]

The divine purpose is irresistible and triumphant

Armed with this might then, Jehovah can control history and carry through all obstacles his gracious purpose to redeem a people to himself. We almost hold our breath as we watch how triumphantly it marches on, not so much bearing down opposition, as lifting it up into its service. "*As for you*, ye meant evil against me; but *God* meant it for good" (Gen. 50 : 20). Again and again the purpose seems to be thwarted, sometimes by nature, sometimes by the more fearful opposition of the human will. It may be the long barrenness of Sarah and Rebekah. It may be the cowardice of Abraham or Isaac whose denial of their wives all but imperils the holy seed. It may be the treachery of Jacob, which drives him away from the land of promise. It may be the cruel malice of Joseph's brethren which hardly shrank from murdering the beautiful dreamer who was destined to save a hungry world. It may be the resourceful cruelty of Pharaoh. But it is all one. The purpose marches on undismayed. The Lord

[1] Ex. 9 : 23.

[2] Ex. 9 : 1, 13, and 10 : 3.

[3] Or "the earth;" the point would be the same.

[4] To Isaac, Gen. 26 : 3, to Jacob, 28 : 15, to Joseph, 39 : 2, to Moses, Ex. 4 : 12.

is mindful of his own. The more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied, so that their mysterious success strikes even their enemies with an uncanny fear.[1] There is a providence that shapes human life, sometimes in spite of itself, in accordance with a divine purpose. It compels Isaac to bless Jacob against his will. Nothing is too hard for it. It overrules the fraud of Jacob and the fraud of Laban.[2] It leads Abraham's steward in the right way when he sets out in faith upon his perplexing errand.[3] The most explicit statement of the doctrine of Providence naturally occurs in the story of Joseph, where the opposition was peculiarly varied and overwhelming. "Be not angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither; for *God did send me before you to preserve life.* For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and there are yet five years in which there shall be neither ploughing nor harvest. And *God sent me before you* to preserve you a remnant in the earth and to save you alive by a great deliverance. So now *it was not you that sent me hither but God*" (Gen. 45 : 4-8). The discipline was to fit for the duty, it was therefore of God, as was also the success with which it was crowned. "*God* has made me lord of all Egypt" (Gen. 45 : 9).

Nemesis

This providence, though gracious, is also stern, for it is moral, and brings even a good man's sin back upon his own head. Nemesis comes not always swiftly, but surely;

[1] Ex. 1 : 12. [2] Gen. 31 : 7. [3] Gen. 24 : 48.

and not seldom pays the sinner in kind. Jacob, who treacherously impersonated his brother, finds himself afterward face to face with a wife who has been forced to impersonate her sister. His craft is met by Laban's craft. Rachel outwits her father in the matter of the images, as he had defrauded her in the matter of a husband. There was a great cry in the land of Egypt, when the people woke one morning to find that Pharaoh's cruel scheme to destroy Israel's children had been so strangely and terribly avenged upon themselves. Well might Joseph's brethren with guilty conscience, tremble before this awful power ;[1] for its other name is God.[2]

[1] Gen. 42 : 21, 22. [2] Gen. 44 : 16 and 50 : 19.

THE PROPHETICO-PRIESTLY HISTORIANS

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I

DEUTERONOMY AND ITS INFLUENCE

The law book—practically the book of Deuteronomy—discovered in 621 B. C.

The year 621 B. C. marked an epoch for Israel both in the history of her religion and in the history of her literature. For the discovery of a law book in that year produced effects which were nothing less than revolutionary in both those directions. Its regulations profoundly affected existing usage and ideals; its phraseology and stand-point influenced not only subsequent literature, but even existing records of the past. The book discovered was our present book of Deuteronomy in whole or in part, and it was discovered in the course of certain temple repairs during the reign of Josiah. The story of the discovery, with that of the reformation which it swiftly inaugurated, is told in 2 Kings 22 and 23. It is plain from the narrative that the interest of the book centred for Josiah and his supporters in its legislation, not in its history. Indeed, it has been supposed that the discovered book represented only the legislative portions of our Deu-

teronomy, or even only a part of these; for, as we saw to be the case with the Jehovistic and Elohistic documents, it is certain that more hands than one appear in the book.[1] This would include from chapter 5, or at any rate 12, to 26, together with 28; the original book would be smaller still. But the historical introduction and conclusion, if not part of the discovered book, must have been added not long afterward, probably before the exile, and for our purpose may be regarded as integral to the book.

The law of the single sanctuary and the need for such a law

The Deuteronomic legislation was comprehensive, but its strength was directed mainly toward the abolition of all local sanctuaries and the centralization of worship at Jerusalem. How popular those sanctuaries were, and how dear and ancient were the memories attaching to them, we see in the prophetic narrative of the Hexateuch. How the worship degenerated until it finally differed little, if at all, from Baal worship, we see in the vivid pages of Hosea. Here then was a problem: how was the worship to be purified? The abuses could hardly be controlled; so the knot was cut by enacting that the sanctuaries at which they were practised should be illegal, and that the only legitimate worship should be that of the Jerusalem temple. That was the place chosen by "Jehovah your God out of all your tribes to set his name there" (12 : 5). Every

[1] Cf. *e.g.* the transition from "thou" to "you" in adjacent paragraphs, with the coincident change of tone; *e.g.* Dt. 12 : 1-12 (you) is more aggressive than 13-31 (thou).

other place at which the people had hitherto sacrificed (12 : 8) was to be utterly destroyed, with all its symbols of idolatrous worship—altars, stone pillars, wooden poles called asherim, and images (12 : 2, 3) ; for Deuteronomy had, as we have seen,[1] risen to an exalted conception of the spirituality of the Godhead (4 : 12, 15).

The book is prophetico-priestly

Thus the book is written in the interests of worship. Not however in the narrow sense of ritual. For worship at that time was immoral ; prostitution was practised in the name of religion.[2] So that morality itself was at stake, and the book is as truly a prophetic protest against sin of all kinds as it is a priestly campaign against the reigning idolatry. The two were really inseparable, and for this reason we may call Deuteronomy and the books influenced by it prophetico-priestly, as distinguished, on the one hand, from the Jehovistic and Elohistic documents, which are specimens of the almost purely prophetic spirit working on history, and, on the other, from the priestly document, which is confined almost exclusively to ritual interests.

It influenced the conception of the history

This book created a revolution in religious theory corresponding to that which it created in practice. With the strange tendency of the Hebrews to conceive all good laws as old, the cardinal law of one exclusive sanctuary was held to have been in operation since the days of Solomon, who built the temple ; or, on a stricter theory, from

[1] Pp. 25, 66 (note 1). [2] 23 : 17 ; Am. 2 : 7.

the time of Moses himself.[1] The older historical records were edited and in part re-written from this new standpoint, and king after king comes under the implicit censure of the editors for not removing the "high places," as they are called. Thus a great literary movement was set on foot, which affected all the historical records, from the older documents in the books of Joshua, Judges and Samuel, down to the date of the discovery of the book of Deuteronomy itself, and which further affected the composition of the history from that date till the fall and the exile of Judah.

The Deuteronomic editors are not interested in history as such

Enough has been said to show that the interest of the authors of Deuteronomy and of those who worked in their spirit, is not in historical fact as such, but rather in a point of view; not so much in history as in the philosophy of history. The brief narrative prefixed to the legislation of Deuteronomy offers practically no new contribution to the facts: it rests upon the older Jehovist-Elohistic document. It is interesting to watch at critical points in the history—which, be it remembered, was arranged and edited by Deuteronomic editors who would deal with existing material according to their own ideals—it is interesting to watch how supremely indifferent they are to history in our sense of that word. In the book of Joshua, for example, there is no description whatever of what must have been a very fierce campaign in the

[1] 1 K. 3 : 2, 3 offers an excellent illustration of both theories.

centre of the country, though in its place there is an idealization of its results,[1] which corresponds closely with certain injunctions in Deuteronomy 27 : 1-8. Again, each of the last two chapters of Joshua is a farewell address, the former by the Deuteronomist,[2] the latter in the main by the Elohist. Now apart from the ideal obedience of Israel in 23 : 8, contradicted by the fact in 24 : 23, the latter chapter has many interesting points of contact with the history which are lacking in the former (cf. 24 : 11, 12). The reigns of two of the greatest kings of Israel and Judah—Jeroboam II. and Uzziah—are dismissed in seven verses each,[3] verses, too, which in the latter case contain no hint, and in the former not much more than a hint of their exceptional importance. Almost equal indifference is manifested to the great reign of Omri (1 K. 16). That indifference sometimes results in statements which, to say the least, sound strange, if not mechanical, as when we are told that Zimri perished for walking in the way of Jeroboam, though he reigned only seven days.[4]

The Deuteronomist then does not care for fact as such; it is his to point the moral of the tale. In particular, he

[1] 8 : 30-35.

[2] This phrase is used simply for convenience. It is not implied and not probable, that even the first Deuteronomic redaction—there were certainly two (see pp. 96, 97)—was executed by one man. It is part of a movement.

[3] 2 K. 14, 23-29 and 15 : 1-7, with which, strictly speaking, we should take 14 : 22. 14 : 21 (cf. 15 : 2) belongs rather to the story of Amaziah.

[4] 1 K. 16 : 15-20.

But rather in its didactic value. Cf. Deuteronomic influence on (1) the book of Joshua

emphasizes in the book of Joshua that the promises of Jehovah to the patriarchs were fulfilled by the acquisition of the land.[1] He is fond, too, of insisting on the didactic value of the history. The marvellous career of Israel, for example, convinced the affrighted Canaanites that Jehovah was God in heaven above, and on earth beneath;[2] and the passage of the Jordan was designed to lead all the people of the earth to the fear of Jehovah.[3] The Deuteronomist has a keen eye for the salient points of the history, for which he sometimes composes speeches of earnest and dramatic power. Such points are to be found at the opening and close of Joshua's career as leader (Josh. 1 and 23). He is naturally especially fond of emphasizing the law,[4] regarding national and individual welfare as determined by the attitude adopted to it. It is to be the object of ceaseless meditation, day and night; the bravest and the wisest need it, a Solomon as well as a Joshua.[5]

[1] Josh. 1 : 11; 21 : 43-45.

[2] Josh. 2 : 11. This phrase is found elsewhere only in Dt. 4 : 39.

[3] Josh. 4 : 21-24, so corrected text in v. 24.

[4] Josh. 23 : 6.

[5] 1 K. 3 : 14; 9 : 4; Josh. 1 : 8. There is no space to dwell on the language of these and similar passages, but that is distinctively Deuteronomic: Cf. Josh. 1 : 3-5 with Dt. 11 : 24, 25.

"	1 : 7	"	"	2 : 27 turn neither to the right hand nor to the left.
"	1 : 11	"	"	12 : 1 the land which Jehovah your God giveth you to possess.
"	1 : 7	"	"	5 : 1 observe to do.
"	23 : 6	"	"	4 : 6 observe and do.
"	22 : 5	"	"	4 : 29 with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

and many other phrases, as characteristic though not so striking: Cf. Josh. 23 : 16 with Dt. 1 : 35 the good land.

(2) The book of Judges

The influence of the Deuteronomic editor on the book of Judges is very marked. Not so much that he touched the details of the stories—many of the stories are practically intact (cf. Abimelech, ch. 9)—but he determined the whole conception of the history. The fortunes of the people in their new land before the consolidation effected by the monarchy, ran a very checkered course; jealousies within and wars without, wars which often spelt failure and misery. To this period was applied the Deuteronomic view of history, which was that faithfulness to Jehovah and obedience to his commandments would be rewarded with material prosperity, while unfaithfulness and disobedience would be punished with misfortune.[1] Fortunately, this view of the history is presented in the preface to the book proper, 2 : 6 to 16 : 31, in a very elaborate scheme, 2 : 11 to 3 : 6, which is repeated in a less elaborate and more definite form two or three times in the course of the book (for example, 3 : 7-10; 6 : 7-10; 10 : 6-16). Neither the language nor the ideas of that scheme bear the remotest resemblance to the stories of the book,[2] for example, of Jephthah, Gideon, Samson, while they are in both respects thoroughly Deuteronomic. Here then is a palpable illustration of his conception of history. The oscillations of national fortune follow the oscillations

[1] Cf. Dt. 28.

[2] Some of these betray moral reflection of their own: Cf. the Abimelech story, 9 : 56, 57.

of national faith. Unfaithfulness can only end in calamity, here in defeat by a foreign invader; but the pitiful Jehovah will always extend his grace to a penitent people. The idea may often seem to be worked out mechanically, but it is the idea of men who had a mighty faith in God as the Lord of history, using national vicissitudes as one of his means of discipline, and imparting to things material a spiritual significance.

(3) The book of Samuel

In the books of Samuel, the traces of Deuteronomic influence, though few, are significant, and occur at critical points in the history:—a decisive battle against the Philistines represented as won for Israel by Samuel's intercession,[1] Samuel's farewell address to the people,[2] and Nathan's announcement to David of the continuance of his dynasty.[3] Nothing could be more happy than the choice of these incidents, especially the last two, as marking crises. The first passage presents the same view of the history as that which finds classic expression in the Deuteronomic programme of the book of Judges. It regards Israel's misfortune as due to her apostasy, and finds her deliverance assured in her penitence; it exhibits the same power of seeing the inner significance of the history,[4] and the same indifference to actual fact.[5] The close of Samuel's career, like the close of Joshua's, also

[1] 1 S. 7: 3-16. [2] 1 S. 12. [3] 2 S. 7.
[4] V. 12 suggests the historical foundation of the chapter.
[5] V. 13 contradicts 9: 16 and 14: 52.

offered a peculiarly fitting opportunity to emphasize the principles of the divine government of Israel; and that is done in Samuel's farewell address, which in parts is an unmistakable reminiscence of the familiar formulæ of the book of Judges,[1] and forms so appropriate a summary of the teaching and some of the facts[2] of that book as to make it highly probable that this chapter was the original conclusion of the book of Judges. Just as the divine discipline and pity marked the unsettled period of the Judges, so it should continue to shape the new era of the monarchy. With peculiar propriety, this truth is emphasized just at the moment where David, now securely established upon his throne, determined to build the temple and thereby associate with the monarchy the adequate recognition of Jehovah.

(4) The book of Kings

It is, however, in the book of Kings that the Deuteronomic influence has been most thorough and pervasive. The importance of the law receives emphatic reiteration,[3] and the cardinal principle of that law, namely, the purity and centralization of the worship, is the standard by which all the kings are tried. It was only natural then that the Deuteronomist should seize the brilliant opportunity offered to him by the dedication of the temple.[4] The northern kingdom had its own sanctuaries, therefore all the kings of the northern kingdom fell under the censure of

[1] Cf. 12: 9 ff. [2] Cf. v. 11. [3] 1 K. 2: 3, 4; 9: 1-9; 2 K. 18: 6.
[4] Cf. 1 K. 8, which is almost entirely Deuteronomic.

the Deuteronomist as doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah; and, as Jeroboam is regarded as the founder of the schismatic worship,[1] he is the type, as he is the source, of all subsequent infidelity.[2] When a general charge expands into a definite one, the catalogue of sins is presented in the language of Deuteronomy.[3] But the law which would have abolished all those abuses, was the law of the central sanctuary; to the Deuteronomist it was the central law, and special attention is repeatedly called to the breach of it even by good kings, like Asa.[4] Of course, it was no breach according to earlier ideas. The local sanctuaries had been for centuries legitimate, as we see from the many unchallenged allusions to them, for example, in the lives of Samuel, Saul and Elijah. Indeed, at one of them, Solomon himself had a special revelation,[5] but according to the Deuteronomic theory, they were all illegal.

Two Deuteronomic redactions of Kings

This last illustration is interesting, as it suggests an inference which other allusions throughout the books of Kings convert into a certainty—namely, that there were two Deuteronomic redactions of these books. One of these regarded worship at the high places as wrong only after the building of the temple; thus 1 Kings 3 : 2 excuses such worship in Solomon's early days on that account. A

[1] 1 K. 12 : 28, 29. [2] 2 K. 13 : 2; 14 : 24; 15 : 24, etc.
[3] *E.g.*, charge against Rehoboam, 1 K. 14 : 22, 23; cf. Dt. 12 : 2, 3; 23 : 17.
[4] 1 K. 15 : 14. [5] At Gibeon, 1 K. 3 : 5.

severer conception of the law, however, regards such worship as, under all circumstances, illegitimate; thus, verse 3 censures Solomon for it. Whereas verse 4 with the following story regards it as a matter of course. There were then two Deuteronomic redactions of the books of Kings: one reaching to about the end of 2 Kings 23— before the exile, perhaps about 600 (the temple is still standing, 1 K. 8: 29); and another, which cannot have been earlier than 560, for it carries the history down to the pardon of Jehoiachin in 561.[1] This second hand wrote the last two chapters of the book, and touched it here and there throughout, for some passages clearly imply that the catastrophe has come.[2] To this class belongs the brief sad comment on the impotence of Josiah's reformation to avert the impending blow,[3] so unlike the joyful copiousness with which the story of the reformation was told.[4]

Later additions. Cf. 2 K. 17

Both these hands and a still later one[5] are obvious in a chapter which for its importance as a summary presentation of the philosophy of Israel's history, deserves special mention, namely 2 Kings 17. With the Deuteronomic skill for selecting special crises for comment, the fall of the northern kingdom is seized upon as a vivid, nay, ter-

[1] 2 K. 25: 27. [2] 1 K. 9: 7-9. [3] 2 K. 23: 26, 27.

[4] These redactions are known to criticism as D and D^2, and are represented in this volume by standard italic and small italic type respectively.

[5] Indicated in this volume by small plain type.

rible illustration of the ways of God with Israel. Verses 18, 21-23, which originally followed verse 6, represent the ordinary Deuteronomic judgment which finds the sin of Israel to consist in "walking in all the sins of Jeroboam." Verses 7-20, except 18, though still moving in the language and the thought of Deuteronomy, trace the calamity to more specific sources, like star-worship and the neglect of the prophetic word, and there is at least a hint of Judah's fate in verse 19. In a later passage still, 34^{b}-40, the fall of the kingdom is ascribed to the neglect of the *written* word. The chapter shows impressively how the fall of the northern kingdom haunted the minds and imaginations of men who believed in the divine discipline of Israel, and how by different ways they arrived at the conclusion that it corroborated divine justice.

Subtle influence of the redaction

Sometimes the Deuteronomic setting of an incident completely transforms the nature of that incident. For example, the section introducing Solomon's troubles (1 K. 11 : 14 ff.), taken probably from a biography of Solomon, suggests, by its setting, that those troubles were the direct retribution of the apostasy described in the previous section 1-13. That, however, was not the idea of the biography; the previous section is Deuteronomic. Similarly, the sequence of the narrative in 2 Kings 21 : 19-24 suggests that the murder of Amon was the penalty he paid for forsaking the God of his fathers. So again, the success of Joash in recovering cities from Aram—a success really

due to Assyrian campaigns against Aram—is attributed to the covenant which Jehovah had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.[1] There was a growing tendency to effect a sometimes forcible correspondence between desert and destiny. The Septuagint of 1 Kings 22 : 38 shows how Ahab's memory grew more and more hateful,[2] and one Greek version of 2 Kings 17 : 1-2 represents King Hosea, about whom the early decision was probably a favorable one (cf. v. 2), as worse than all the others, because under him the doom of the northern kingdom was sealed. Perhaps the most instructive illustration of this theoretical attitude to history is to be found in Judges 2 : 1-5, which, though probably later than the Deuteronomic redactions, was written in their spirit. There the people are reproved by an angel for making a league with the inhabitants of the land, instead of driving them out. The penalty is that the nations whom they have spared, are to be a snare to them. But the older sources tell us plainly that they *could not* drive them out.[3] The Deuteronomist accepts the fact that they did not, and puts upon it his own religious interpretation.

[1] 2 K. 13 : 23-25. [2] Cf. 2 K. 21 : 3.
[3] Josh. 15 : 63; cf. 1 K. 9 : 21.

Throughout Deuteronomy and the historical books from Joshua to Kings, the original sources are printed in ordinary type and the Deuteronomic elements in italics. Later supplemental matter is put into smaller plain or italic type. A few passages where two complete stories have been fused together are printed in parallel columns.

II

THE LAST WORDS AND DEATH OF MOSES (Deuteronomy)

1. *Moses's Address to the People* (Dt. 1 : 1 to 4 : 40)

(1) *Historical Retrospect* (1 to 3)

Moses reviews the recent history and shows how it illustrates Jehovah's love for Israel. From Sinai to Kadesh (1)

After[1] *the defeat of the two mighty kings east of Jordan, Moses addressed the people in the plains of Moab. Their departure for the promised land, he reminded them, had been divinely enjoined on Mount Horeb. At that time, cumbered with his heavy responsibility, he had, on his own*[2] *initiative, instituted judges to decide impartially all ordinary cases, reserving the more difficult for himself. After the horrors of the wilderness march they had reached Kadesh, whence twelve men had been despatched to spy out the land. These men had visited the south, and brought back a good report of the land, but disheartened the people by their account of the inhabitants. His own efforts—he went on—to hearten them by an appeal to Jehovah's power and promise, and to his tender love for them in the past, had been of no avail. Wherefore divine judgment was pronounced upon all that genera-*

[1] This retrospect is based on JE, and is worked over by the Deuteronomist in a didactic spirit. The older sources in Deuteronomy and Joshua are still J and E or JE as in Gen. to Num.

[2] On Jethro's, in Ex. 18 : 22.

tion excepting Caleb, even upon Moses himself, and Joshua was designated leader. The people, after confession, had gone up to the attack; but forsaken of Jehovah whose displeasure they had braved, they had been defeated, whereafter they had made a long stay at Kadesh.

From Kadesh to the Arnon (2)

After wandering about the southern mountains of Edom until all that rebel generation was dead, they turned their faces northward, again reminded by Moses of the bountiful love of Jehovah, proved already in the wilderness, and proved now again in the friendly[1] *attitude of the Edomites, and marched peacefully past the land assigned by Jehovah to their old kinsmen Moab and Ammon, inspiring terror everywhere. But Sihon, King of the Amorites, refused to allow them to pass through his land, and Jehovah gave Israel the victory over him and his cities one and all; and they were all put under the ban.*[2]

Triumphs and settlement on East Jordan (3)

Such, too, was the fate of the giant Og and his great walled cities in Bashan. Thus was the land east of the Jordan conquered from the Arnon in the south to Mount Hermon in the far north, and assigned to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. Moses, however, had urged these tribes[3] *to cross the Jordan and aid their brethren, leaving their wives and property on*

[1] Hostile in Num. 20 : 14-21. [2] Cf. Dt. 20 : 16-18.
[3] The suggestion comes from the tribes themselves in Num. 32 : 16, 17.

the east side; he had also strengthened Joshua for his future task by an appeal to Jehovah's recent victories. Yearning to see the consummation of Jehovah's wondrous, gracious work begun, he had earnestly prayed that he might be suffered to cross the Jordan; but sternly had his prayer been refused. He might but look upon the goodly land; his it was, however, to hearten the future leader Joshua.

(2) *Exhortation* (4 : 1-40)

Then with the most impressive earnestness, Moses besought them to keep diligently the divine statutes and judgments which he was about to teach them;[1] *for on their nearness to God and on their righteous laws depended the national life and welfare and Israel's place among the peoples. Especially did he charge them to remember the lesson of Horeb—that Jehovah was an unseen spiritual God, and that therefore there must be no worship of any material thing, be it image of man or beast, or be it the stars of heaven. This law was fundamental. The breach of it would bring upon the people exile from the promised land; yet from that exile their merciful God would bring them back, if they sought him with penitent zeal.* Moses urges upon them the spirituality of Jehovah (4 : 1-31)

Surely no nation had ever had proof so convincing of the existence of its God as Israel had had of Jehovah, And his absoluteness (4 : 32-40)

1 The legislation in the book of Dt. (5 to 26, and 28).

whose mighty hand and stretched out arm had so wondrously wrought for Israel in Egypt, making it clear that Jehovah was the one and only God. "His mighty love," said Moses in conclusion, "manifested in his choice of you, should inspire you to obey the statutes and commandments which I command you this day, that you and your posterity may prosper and prolong your days for ever on the ground which Jehovah your God is giving you."

2. *Renewed Exhortation* (27 : 5-13 and 29 : 1 to 32 : 47)

Symbolic ceremony on Ebal (27 : 5-8, 11-13)

Moses instructed the people to set up an altar to Jehovah on Mount Ebal, when they crossed to the promised land; also to write the law upon tablets, and to ratify the covenant in worship, solemnly invoking the blessing upon obedience and the curse upon disobedience.[1]

Israel Jehovah's people (27 : 9, 10)

On that day, Israel was constituted the people of Jehovah, and called to obey his commandments and statutes.

Exhortation and warning (29)

After laying down the statutes,[2] *Moses again urged upon the people Jehovah's great and manifold goodness to them as a motive to obedience. The covenant to be established that day between Jehovah and Israel, in accordance with his ancient promise to the patriarchs, was to be binding also upon posterity; any lapse into idolatry would be very grievously punished.*

[1] Instructions fulfilled in Josh. 8 : 30-35; cf. the ratification at Horeb, Ex. 24 : 3-8.

[2] Dt. 5 to 26, and 28.

Promise and appeal (30)

Yet if they but sought him with penitent zeal, he would in pity bring them back from exile to their own land and there reward their obedience with prosperity. It was no hard or perplexing commandment this, to love Jehovah and to do his will; yet it involved the highest issues, for obedience meant life and disobedience death. Then he closed with a solemn appeal to choose life.[1]

Last words of encouragement (31 : 1-13)

Then the worn and aged man gave Joshua his parting charge, strengthening both him and the people with the assurance of Jehovah's abiding presence, and ordained that the law should be read before the assembled people once every seven years.

Joshua's commission (31 : 14, 15, 23)

Joshua received the divine[2] commission to face with courage the completion of the task which Moses had begun, and with the assurance that the ancient promise would be brought to fulfilment through him.[3]

Instructions touching the law (31 : 24-29)

Moses ordained that the copy of the law, which he committed to writing, should be preserved by the priests in the sanctuary as a witness against the corruption and apostasy which he foresaw.

Last exhortation (32 : 45-47)

Then for the last time he laid it upon their hearts to obey the law and to teach their children so to do, "for," said he, "it is your life."

[1] This chapter expands the thought of 4 : 29-31.

[2] "He" of v. 23 is not Moses, but Jehovah (cf. v. 14).

[3] Vv. 16-22 introduce the song, ch. 32.

3. *The Death of Moses* (34)

Pathos of the end. Moses dies (34)

Moses, aged but strong,[1] climbed Pisgah, and saw with his own eyes the noble land which Jehovah promised so long ago to Abraham's seed, and into which he had now all but led the people; but it was not given him of God to set foot upon it himself. He died and was buried in an unknown grave. Of all the prophets, he was the greatest, alike in his intimacy with God, *and in the wonders that he wrought.*

III

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

The continuation of J and E in the Book of Joshua

Both the documents which, singly or in combination, contributed the prophetic history in the first four books of the Hexateuch, are continued in the Book of Joshua, possibly also in the Book of Judges, and some think even in Samuel. Their presence has the same effect as it had in the previous books; on the one hand, of strengthening the evidence for the incidents which they record, and on the other, of sometimes obscuring the outlines of those incidents. The scene, for example, at the crossing of the Jordan is anything but clear. Already in 3 : 17 the people are over the river; in 4 : 4, 5 the

[1] Contrast 31 : 2.

implication is that they are only about to cross. 3 : 12 and 4 : 2 are obvious duplicates. 4 : 9 places the memorial stones in the Jordan, 4 : 20 places them at Gilgal. On this blending of sources we need not further dwell.[1]

The Deuteronomic element

A word, however, has still to be said about apparent contradictions between stories from these sources and Deuteronomic passages, which, as we have seen, imply a different point of view. For example, 13 : 11 asserts that the Geshurites and Maacathites were driven out by Israel, a statement which is flatly contradicted by the next verse but one. Compare also the two accounts of Caleb's inheritance, the older in Joshua 15 : 13-19 (= Jud. 1 : 10-15) and the Deuteronomic in Joshua 14 : 6-15. Once for all be it said that these and similar passages are not to be pressed as contradictions. The Deuteronomist does not strictly contradict the older history; he idealizes it. When he touches it, it is not as a historian, but as a theorist; not to add corrective fact, but to show the inner side, the ideal truth, the eternal significance of certain typical scenes. We know that the conquest of Canaan took a long time[2] and was not completely effected until long after Joshua's death. The oldest sources frankly admit that in many districts it was never thoroughly effected at all.[3] Yet the Deuteronomist asserts that it was entirely effected within one generation and under Joshua,

[1] Cf. ch. 6, the capture of Jericho.
[2] Josh. 11 : 18. [3] Jud. 1 : 27-36.

so that Jehovah's ancient promise stood fulfilled.[1] And so it did, for the man who had eyes to see it. The factors were all at work which would ultimately compel success. Jehovah was on the scene governing and guiding this national movement and aspiration for great ends of his own; and the work which he had begun would assuredly be completed, indeed was already ideally complete. No man need take offence at the Deuteronomist's presentation of history. The work of the historian was over before he comes upon the scene. It is his to interpret the history, and to see it *sub specie æternitatis*.

Israel's early successes in the invasion

The ground has now been cleared for a brief sketch of the history traversed by the prophetic narratives of the Book of Joshua. Moses is dead, but the work goes on; divinely gifted leaders are never wanting. "After the death of Moses, Jehovah spake to Joshua."[2] The interest grows intense; within three days the hope of centuries is to be realized. The fame of Israel has gone before her. A confession of the terrible power that is hers in her God is wrung from the lips of a native of the doomed country.[3] Nothing can stay this people's progress. With sure hope[4] Joshua arranges for the march, and his hope is not put to shame. The Jordan yields as the Red Sea had yielded; and they stand triumphant on the land of their fathers. The native kings tremble at their approach,[5] as well they might; for behold, no less an one than the prince of the

[1] Josh. 21 : 43-45. [2] Josh. 1 : 1. [3] 2 : 9. [4] 3 : 5. [5] 5 : 1.

angelic host is standing by Joshua with a drawn sword in his hand. Israel's leader is not alone; he has unseen resources.[1] How powerful those resources are is shown by the swift fall of the first city they attack, the walled Jericho. There was fighting[2]; but the story is so told as to emphasize the mysterious presence of the divine help.

Her varied fortunes

With one of those dramatic contrasts which we saw before to be so characteristic of the prophetic narrative, the success at Jericho is followed by the tragedy at Ai—a tragedy deeper than at first they know; for it was not merely the failure of an attack and the loss of men, but the breach of a great moral law, with the loss of stability and power which such a breach always entails. Avarice led to sacrilege, and by the sin of one man the fate of a people was imperilled. But when the terrible punishment has been enacted,[3] and the holiness of Jehovah, and the dignity of moral law vindicated, Israel resumes her triumphant course. The methods were rough,[4] because the struggle was fierce. The terror inspired by Israel increases. Powerful cities like Gibeon[5] do not hesitate, in their terror, to secure her favor by fraud; and where Israel's policy stumbles, it is because she forgets

[1] 5 : 13-15. [2] 24 : 11.

[3] Here the sources blend. In 7 : 26 Achan alone appears to be stoned: cf. 25[b], they stoned *him*. But in 25[c], the family appears to be stoned too, whereas another version represents family and possessions as burnt with fire, cf. Dt. 13 : 16.

[4] 8 : 28, 29 and 10 : 22-26. [5] 10 : 2.

to consult her God.[1] Kings combine: Joshua meets them in a fierce and memorable battle in which the hand of Israel's mighty God is more visible than ever.

Her ultimate triumph

The country is now pierced. A great campaign is entered upon in the southwest and is everywhere successful. Equal success crowns Joshua's efforts in the northern campaign.[2] But everywhere—on east[3] as well as on west Jordan—there is fierce fighting and the settlement of the invaders is stubbornly contested.[4] At length the land is allotted to the various tribes by Joshua; and after all his work is done, in a farewell address to his assembled people, the old man sets before them the secret of their strength in the past, and earnestly urges them to be faithful to the God who had faithfully kept his ancient promise to them.[5]

IV

THE CONQUEST AND SETTLEMENT

1. *The Conquest of Canaan* (Josh. 1 to 12)

Joshua's assumption of leadership (1)

The prophet indeed is dead; but the warrior takes his place, divinely called thereto, and strengthened by the as-

[1] 9 : 14.

[2] 11 : 1-13. This may be part of the tendency to idealize Joshua, as in Jud. 4 and 5, which must be an old story, it is Barak who subdues Jabin.

[3] 17 : 1. [4] Cf. the fortunes of Dan. 19 : 47, Jud. 1 : 34. [5] 24.

surance *that if he but be brave and strong, and earnestly keep the law of Moses, God's presence will be with him as it was with Moses, leading him everywhere to certain victory.* Then Joshua through the officers bade the people make preparation, *especially urging the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, to stand by the cause of Jehovah and his people until all were securely settled in the promised land. And they vowed him the same implicit obedience that they had rendered to Moses.*

He sends spies to Jericho (2)

With the prudence of true leadership, Joshua sent men across the Jordan to Jericho to spy and report upon the land. The king, however, with a shrewd suspicion of their purpose, sent and demanded their surrender. By a ruse, the woman with whom they were staying, saved them; for, heathen though she was, she had a deep faith in Israel's destiny, *and confessed that Israel's God was supreme, whose marvels and victories had already smitten the inhabitants of the land with terror.* In return for her kindness, she asked and received, on condition of fidelity, the solemn assurance that she and all her family be spared, when Jehovah should give Israel the land. By the aid of her advice, the spies reached Joshua in safety and triumphantly told of the terror that Israel's presence had already inspired.

The crossing of the Jordan (3)

The people moved toward the Jordan, the last barrier to the promised land. Here then was another crisis: *God was that day to convince the people that he was with the*

new leader, as he had been with the old. Joshua assured them that their God *was lord of all the earth, and* would, in their extremity, work a wonder among them, which would convince them that he was indeed a living God, *able to lead them to victory over all enemies.* After solemn preparation, they began the passage of the river, preceded by the priests with the ark; and their God, who went before, prepared for them, in his strange providence, a way across the river to the land which he had promised.

The memorial stones (4 : 1 to 5 : 1)

So great a blessing must be held in everlasting remembrance. Therefore twelve stones—symbol of the unbroken unity of the delivered people—were carried to Gilgal, the first encampment in the promised land, and set up there,[1] to be a visible memorial of God's grace, *that for all time the fathers might teach the children of the deed of love and might by which Jehovah had set their feet at last in the promised land, and that this manifested power might bring the whole world to the worship of Israel's God. This strange interposition of Jehovah for his people struck terror into the heart of all the native kings.*

The circumcision (5 : 2-9)

At Gilgal Joshua imposed circumcision on all the people—*for they, being born in the wilderness, had not been circumcised*—and thus he rolled away[2] the reproach of Egypt.

[1] Another source says "in the Jordan."

[2] Gilgal, here connected with "rolling away," more probably means "cromlech," cf. 4 : 20.

The city first to be assailed was Jericho. But before the advance, the leader of Israel was strengthened by the vision of a heavenly leader, even the prince of the angels,[1] with sword drawn to fight for Israel. Joshua's encouraging vision (5 : 13-15)

Now Jericho, despite her mighty men, was in terror of Israel—a terror justified by the sequel; for Joshua took her by inspired strategy. He made the people march seven times around the affrighted city, thereby devoting her to a sevenfold doom. For no walls can stand before Jehovah, when he fights for his people. Fall they must, and fall they did, and that right speedily at the blast of the horn and the battle-shout. The whole city, their first capture, they devoted to the God who had given them the victory. But Rahab and all her family were spared, because of her kindness to the spies, and she has her place in Israel to this day. The fall of Jericho (6)

Joshua invoked a curse on the man who would rebuild[2] the city.

This triumph was followed by an abrupt reverse. The little band that attempted the northwesterly gorge into the heart of the country, was beaten by the men of Ai. The people were in superstitious terror; and Joshua, all but in despair, laid the matter before Jehovah, appealing to him to rescue his honor from the taunts of the native peoples. The defeat at Ai; Achan's trespass and punishment (7)

[1] Cf. 1 K. 22 : 19. The somewhat similar vision in Gen. 32 : 2, suggests that the "host of Jehovah" (v. 14) is the heavenly host.

[2] Or perhaps "fortify." Cf. 1 K. 16 : 34.

Simple but searching came the answer to his prayer; sin there was somewhere, exposing the people to the wrath of their God; and until the sinful thing was put away, the wrath and defeat would remain. By the divinely guided lot, the offender was discovered. Urged by Joshua to acknowledge Jehovah as a just and all-seeing God, Achan confessed his sin—the sin of covetousness. He had taken of the precious things already devoted to Jehovah, and so had involved himself and all his people in the doom of things devoted. The "troubler"[1] of Israel was stoned;[2] his family and possessions were burned; and communion between Jehovah and his people was restored.

The capture of Ai (8 : 1-29)

Success was now possible. The assault was renewed with care and cunning *and with the divine assurance of victory*. Both in the strategy and at a crisis in the battle, Jehovah, God of battles, guided Israel's leader as he had promised, and gave his people complete victory. King and city perished.[3]

The stratagem of the Gibeonites (9)

Against such a foe resistance was clearly useless. Powerful confederations were formed to stem his advance. But the Gibeonites, a powerful clan,[4] moved to fear by the recent successes of Israel *and by the fame of Israel's God*,

[1] The Hebrew word suggests connection with Achor.

[2] In one version the only was stoned. Cf. Dt. 24 : 16; in the other, his family and possessions were involved in his fate. Cf. Dt. 13 : 15-17.

[3] The story of the central campaign is omitted. The summary notice of 8 : 30-35 is probably intended as a compensation.

[4] Cf. 10 : 2.

sought to save themselves from their probable doom by making league with the conquerors. The clever cunning with which they posed as travellers from a very far country, eager to make a league with the now famous people of Jehovah, threw Israel completely off their guard. Trusting to appearances, Israel did not consult Jehovah, and so involved themselves in a dangerous league with the people of the land. When the guile of the Gibeonites was discovered, the furious people were for slaying them. Joshua, however, would not permit this; but, with a solemn curse, he condemned them, for their guile, to be slaves of the sanctuary of Israel's God.

The successful campaign in southern Canaan (10 : 1-27)

Then five southern kings, headed by the King of Jerusalem, conspired to take revenge upon Gibeon for weakening the confederacy by its alliance with Israel. In terror, Gibeon appealed to Joshua, who, *with the divine assurance of success*, at once responded. His confidence was justified; for Jehovah gave him a signal victory, and aided Israel by sending a furious hailstorm, which wrought havoc among the foe. In answer to Joshua's prayer of faith, *the day was also prolonged*[1] till the work of war was done. So runs the tale in the Book of the Brave. Thus on that terrible and decisive day, *Jehovah himself fought for Israel.* In the pursuit, the foe lost heavily,

[1] The original prayer was possibly for darkness, not for light. "Sun, be thou silent." (Cf. McCurdy, *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*, vol. iii. p. 44, note 1.)

and the kings who had hidden were captured and hanged.

Successive victories (10 : 28-43)

Likewise throughout the whole of the southern campaign Jehovah fought for Israel and subdued the country before Joshua.

The successful campaign in northern Canaan (11 : 1-15)

The northern kings, hearing of Joshua's success, combined under Jabin against Israel at the waters of Merom.[1] But despite their great numbers and their chariots of war, Israel under Jehovah gained a decisive victory. Joshua hamstrung their horses and burnt their chariots; for not in such was Israel to trust. *Hazor the capital of the confederacy was reduced to ashes; the other cities were taken and their inhabitants put to the sword in accordance with the word of Jehovah to Moses.*[2]

Joshua's sweeping success (11 : 16 to 12 : 24)

The war lasted long; for everywhere there was stubborn opposition, divine harbinger of doom. But in the end, Israel won the whole land from the extreme north to the south, extirpating even the tall tribes, the fame of whom had once been a terror, so that they were only to be found in the Philistine country. Thus, after these fierce but prosperous wars in which two kings on the east of the Jordan were defeated and dispossessed and thirty[3] *kings on the west, the weary land had rest, and it was divided by Joshua among the various tribes.*

In accordance with the instructions of Moses,[4] *an altar*

[1] Supposed to be Lake Huleh.
[2] Dt. 20 : 17; 7 : 2.
[3] By a probable change in 12 : 18.
[4] Dt. 27 : 4-8.

was set up to Jehovah on Mount Ebal: also the law was written on tablets, and the covenant ratified in worship. Joshua read every word of Moses's law—the blessing upon obedience and the curse upon disobedience—before the assembled people.

The symbolic ceremony on Ebal (8 : 30-35)

2. *The Settlement of Canaan* (Josh. 13 to 22)

The land assigned by Joshua (13 : 1-14)

Yet the land actually won fell far short of the ideal limits of Israel; there were still unconquered tracts, *in south and north, in Philistia, and Lebanon and elsewhere.* So Israel's aged leader, whose fighting days were almost done, *finished his work under divine impulse by assigning the whole land among the various tribes,*[1] *excepting the districts east of the Jordan, which the two and a half tribes had already received as their inheritance.* There are districts, however, in the northeast, which have not been subdued to this day. *The tribe of Levi received no inheritance: their inheritance was Jehovah.*

The share of Caleb (14 : 6-15)

As a reward of the moral courage and faith in Jehovah which Caleb[2] *had displayed as a spy, he obtained from Joshua his promised share*[3] *of the land, even the Hebron district in the hill country of Judah, facing with confidence in Jehovah the prospect of driving out the tall tribes who still dwelt there.*

[1] The Deuteronomic conception of the conquest, as completely effected by Joshua, has introduced confusion into this chapter.

[2] The name stands for an Edomite clan: cf. v. 6 with Gen. 36 : 11.

[3] Num. 14 : 24.

Won by the sword (15 : 14-19 = Jud. 1 : 10-15)

His hope was justified. For he succeeded in driving them out, and in seizing their strongholds; and Achsah the daughter gained possession of the springs so needful in that south land.

Partial nature of the conquest of Canaan (15 : 63; 16 : 10; 17 : 11-13; 19 : 47; Jud. 1)[1]

But neither in the south, centre, nor north of the country did Israel completely succeed in driving out the ancient inhabitants. Dan, for example, failed to get a foothold in the southwest, which was for long retained by the Canaanites. The tribe was driven to seek territory in the far north, where they captured and occupied Leshem, and called it Dan. In what is now Jerusalem, in Gezer, and over the plain of Esdraelon in the north, the Canaanites maintained themselves side by side with Israel, in some cases being eventually reduced to forced service.

The house of Joseph claims more territory (17 : 14-18)

The descendants of Joseph, finding themselves cramped in the hill country of Ephraim assigned to them by Joshua, and afraid to push north to the plain of Esdraelon, because of the military advantages the Canaanites there had in their chariots, were urged by Joshua, to whom they appealed, to extend their territory bravely and fearlessly northward,[2] by cutting down the forest for themselves.

Land allotted to seven western tribes (18 : 2-10)

Judah and the house of Joseph were already in possession of their territory, *as also the two and a half tribes east of the Jordan;* the other seven showed no alacrity

[1] 15 : 63 = Jud. 1 : 21 with "Judah" for "Benjamin," 19 : 47; cf. Jud. 1 : 34, 35.

[2] Or perhaps—though less probably—eastward, across in Gilead.

in securing theirs. Joshua, *vexed at their listlessness in a cause which was Jehovah's*, urged them to send representatives from each tribe throughout the land and bring back a plan of the cities in the various districts thereof, to be afterward solemnly apportioned to the tribes by lot; and apportioned they were.

When they had finished apportioning the land, Joshua was allotted an inheritance in Ephraim in the city of his choice.[1] Joshua's inheritance (19 : 49, 50)

So Jehovah faithfully kept his ancient promise and brought Israel, through unfailing victory, to peaceful possession of the land of their fathers.[2] Rest at last (21 : 43-45)

Then Joshua, before dismissing the two and a half tribes to their eastern home, commended them for unselfishly maintaining the unity of Israel, and urged them earnestly, now that their rest was won, to love and serve Jehovah their God with heart and soul. The eastern tribes return home (22 : 1-8)

3. *The Last Words and Death of Joshua* (23 and 24)

The aged leader, in his farewell words, reminded the people that all that they had they owed to Jehovah their God. He it was who had fought for them, and he it was who would still drive out for them the nations that were left. But they on their part must cleave to him in faith- Joshua's farewell. The secret of national greatness (23)

[1] As Caleb in Judah 15 : 14-19. These two verses form JE's subscription to the account of the division of the land.

[2] These three verses are the Deuteronomic subscription.

fulness and love, and keep the law of Moses, and hold themselves strenuously aloof from the worship of the gods of the land, and even from intermarriage with the people of the land. This too surely meant idolatry and ruin; for the God who had faithfully kept his every promise to crown their wanderings with victory and peace, would as faithfully keep his threat to exterminate them.

His final appeal (24 : 1-28)

He [1] recounted the gracious deeds of Jehovah in the remote and recent past, from the call of father Abraham to the marvellous deliverance from Egypt, and the no less marvellous successes *in the goodly land to which he had brought them.* This kindness, he urged, imposed upon them the duty of renouncing all strange gods, and of serving Jehovah alone. Now was the time to choose : his own choice could not but be altogether for Jehovah. Animated by his resolute words, the people also vowed themselves enthusiastically to the service of Jehovah alone. Then Joshua solemnly reminded them how serious was the task. There must be no compromise, no apostasy : these Jehovah would punish bitterly. Again the people pledged their solemn word. Whereafter Joshua made a covenant on their behalf that day, and set up a stone by the sanctuary of Jehovah at Shechem as a memorial and witness of the solemn vows the people had taken upon themselves. Then he dismissed the people.

[1] Ch. 24 is from a later Elohist. The language and sentiment approximate, in part, to Dt.

Warfare and exhortation over, he died and was buried in his own city [1]—he, the successor of Moses, and Eleazar the successor of Aaron. His death (24 : 29, 30, 33) [3]

Past and present were linked together in the burial of Joseph's bones [2] at last in the promised land, after the long discipline of exile and wandering. Joseph's bones buried at Shechem (24 : 32)

V

STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES

The transition from the conquest to the monarchy is mediated by the unsettled period described in the Book of Judges, or rather in the second part of that book, 2 : 6 to 16 : 31, the last five chapters (17 to 21) being a supplement, and 1 : 1 to 2 : 5 an introduction,[4] which graphically suggests the not always by any means successful struggles incidental to the conquest. But for one or two contradictions, in which it is always easy to detect the older source,[5] this introduction is of the highest historical value. The introduction

In what spirit the stories in the body of the book were redacted, we have already seen [6]; but the stories themselves are as vigorous as the scheme in which they are set The original sources and the Deuteronomic redaction

[1] 19 : 50. [2] Gen. 50 : 25 (E). [3] 24 : 29, 30 = Jud. 2 : 8, 9.
[4] Cf. pp. 93, 118. [5] Cf. 1 : 8 with 1 : 21 (Josh. 15 : 63). [6] Pp. 93, 94.

is formal. Possibly the older prophetic documents of the Hexateuch reappear in this book. In the narratives there are traits which closely resemble characteristic features of one or the other, and the presence of duplicates is sometimes obvious—most of all in the Gideon story, where there are two accounts of the hero's call, 6 : 11-24 (Jehovist ?) and 6 : 25-32 (Elohist ?). In the one story the princes slain are Oreb and Zeeb, and they meet their fate on the west of the Jordan (7 : 24 to 8 : 3); in the other, they are Zebah and Zalmunna, and the scene is on the east (8 : 4-21). While the Deuteronomic scheme represents Israel as a unity, the original stories show that the interests are really not as yet national, but only tribal. The topography of the country, coupled with the strength of the native peoples even after the invasion, largely shut the various tribes or groups of tribes off from one another, so that they pursued their fortunes for the most part almost independently, except in the great crisis which called forth Deborah, and which saw something like an approximation to unity.

The judges

There are twelve "judges," or rulers, if we include Abimelech, though he is not called a judge, and exclude Shamgar, who clearly does not belong to the original scheme.[1] They are not so distributed, however, that each tribe has a judge of its own. Of the five minor judges, as they are called, Tola, Jair (10 : 1-5), Ibzan, Elon, and Ab-

[1] Cf. 3 : 31 and 4 : 1.

don (12 : 8-15) no details are given except such as, in some cases at least, suggest that these are rather the names of clans than of leaders.

Varied interest of the book

Probably no book in the Bible surpasses the Book of Judges in varied interest. Scenes the most romantic and the most thrilling pass before us: the lion-hearted Deborah giving her judgments beneath her palm-tree, the splendid muster of tribal chivalry on the plain of Esdraelon, the left-handed Ehud plunging his dagger into the breast of the unsuspecting Eglon, Gideon's brilliant midnight attack on Midian, Sisera lying dead in a tent, slain by the hand of his hostess, the merry vintage festival of the men of Shechem (9 : 27), the crowd of Ephraimites at the fords of the Jordan losing their lives because they cannot say Shibboleth, the grim humor and ludicrous escapades of Samson, the cool effrontery with which the Danites carry off the prized image to their new home (18 : 25), the agony of the victorious Jephthah as his heroic daughter comes forth to meet him with timbrel and dance.

Primitive type of the religion

For us, however, the main interest of the book is the religious, and there are here many unmistakable voices of an older time. As in the Hexateuch, angels appear not seldom, and not only to heroes like Gideon, but to women, like Samson's mother; so like are they to men that they can be pressed to partake of hospitality (13 : 16). How primitive the type of religion is may be seen from the

operations of the spirit of Jehovah, which is here almost exclusively associated with war; and the man on whom the spirit is most often recorded to have come is Samson. Still, God was believed to have been with these men as truly as with the fathers, and to have sent them on their mission (6 : 14, 15). But religious belief and practice are still crude. Gideon encourages image-worship, and Micah is happy with his idols, more than happy when he can boast a Levitical priest. Jephthah draws the knife upon his own daughter because of his vow, and there is no such protest as lifts the story of Abraham and Isaac to so high a moral level. Chemosh is as capable of giving land to Moab as Jehovah is to Israel (11 : 24), and the writer who believed in Chemosh would also have believed in Dagon and probably acknowledged at least some justice in the claim made for him by the Philistines (16 : 23).

Historical value of the book

Apart from its religious interest, the book is historically important as showing the fluctuating fortunes of the people, or of the different tribes, before the monarchy. The difficulties of the new comers in maintaining their position among the older inhabitants is admirably illustrated by the story of Abimelech; the natives resented the authority of one whose mother had been one of themselves, because his father belonged to the hated invaders (9 : 28). But most of all does the book illustrate the constant danger of attack to which the as yet unconsolidated people were exposed on the north, east, and south.

The last five chapters, which lie outside the scheme of the book, have an interest of their own. The first story (17 and 18), besides giving a glimpse into the nature of the older religion, and the extreme importance attached to the possession of instruments and agents of worship, throws also much light on the methods by which conquests were made and settlements effected in the new land.[1] The second story (19 to 21) has a peculiar critical as well as religious and historical interest. It is undoubtedly in the main early and suggests that ethical motives were powerful in primitive times; but it has passed through a very late redaction. The perfect unanimity with which Israel acts, contradicts the tone of the rest of the book, where the action is only tribal. Coupled with this unhistorical representation are numbers impossibly high,[2] and facts extremely improbable, indeed incredible—as that, in two days, the Benjamites, *without losing a man*, decimated an army nearly sixteen times their own in numbers. These are all marks of the later tendency to exaggeration, a tendency which can be proved to have grown with the growing remoteness from the events. When to all this it is added that the language is largely that of the priestly document to be discussed later—notice, for example, the prominence of the word "congregation"—the

The appendix

1 Cf. 1 : 34; Josh. 19 : 47.

2 400,000 compared with Deborah's 40,000, cf. 5 : 8. A tribe of 25,700 compared with the 600 Danites of 18 : 11.

late redaction is placed beyond a doubt. The kernel of the story, however, is old, and of much historic interest and value.

VI

BETWEEN THE CONQUEST AND THE MONARCHY

1. *Introduction* (Judg. 1 : 1 to 2 : 5)[1]

Theophany and worship at the sanctuary of Bethel (2 : 1-5)

At Bethel, the religious centre of the land, a divine messenger appeared. *He reproved Israel for sparing the native peoples,*[2] *and declared that those very peoples with their false worship, would be Israel's temptation and ruin.* They acknowledged their God in worship.

2. *The History of Israel in the Days of the Judges* (2 : 6 to 16 : 31)

(1) *The Inner Significance of the History* (2 : 6 to 3 : 6)

Misfortune is the divine chastisement and can be turned by repentance (2 : 6 to 3 : 6)

The generations that succeeded Joshua[3] *forgot all Jehovah's wondrous kindness to the fathers. Their story is the record of apostasy, punishment, repentance, deliverance, going their weary round from generation to*

[1] For ch. 1, which represents the partial nature of the conquest, see p. 118.

[2] But in ch. 1, which is almost entirely historical, except one or two verses like 8 and 18, the implication is that they did not drive them out because they could not: this is expressly stated in the kindred verse Josh. 15 : 63, cf. p. 99.

[3] 2 : 6, 7 = Josh. 24 : 28, 31. Jud. 2 : 8, 9 = Josh. 24 : 29, 30.

generation. They would turn from their own gracious God to the worship of the gods and goddesses of the neighboring peoples. Then an invader would come to execute Jehovah's wrath upon them, and with shallow repentance they would cry to their own God, who would raise up in pity a judge to deliver them. But with the death of the God-inspired leader, a worse apostasy would break out. So on they went from stubbornness to stubbornness, and in chastisement, Jehovah left certain of the ancient peoples unsubdued, to keep Israel in touch with the art of war *and to test their fidelity, a test in which they failed* through intermarriage.[1]

(2) *The Stories of the Judges* (3 : 7 to 16 : 31)

(a) *Othniel* (3 : 7-11)

An illustration of the people's apostasy and of Jehovah's righteous severity and grace is furnished by the period of Othniel, by whom Jehovah delivered Israel from the swarthy king whom he had sent to punish them for their apostasy.

Othniel delivers Israel from Cushanrishathaim (3 : 7-11)

(b) *Ehud* (3 : 12-30)

Another illustration is from the time of Ehud, the left-handed hero, cunning and resourceful, by whom Jehovah delivered Israel from mighty Moab and her king—*the king whom he had empowered to punish his people's sin.*[2]

Ehud delivers Israel from Eglon (3 : 12-30)

[1] The theory embodied in this section is repeated in very similar language, with somewhat more explicit allusions, in 10 : 6-16, cf. 1 S. 12.

[2] For Shamgar (3 : 31) cf. p. 122.

(c) *Deborah and Barak* (4 and 5) [1]

Deborah and Barak deliver Israel from the northern Canaanites (4)

Fickle as ever, the people fell away from their fealty to Jehovah with the disappearance of their deliverer; and again a divine instrument of punishment was raised up in Sisera, a mighty captain in the north, who with his chariots was more than a match for Israel. This time Israel was delivered by the brave, inspired wisdom of a woman, the prophetess Deborah, who urged Barak, the captain of Naphtali, to summon to the fray the warriors of Naphtali and Benjamin, and assured him, in Jehovah's name, of ultimate success, though the glory would be a woman's. The prophetess went with the captain, and her fiery word of assurance kindled the faith of him and his men. Nor was their faith put to shame; for there fell upon Sisera's host a heaven-sent panic. His chariots availed him not; the discomfiture was total. In his flight he found refuge in a Kenite tent, and there by a woman's hand he was slain, in fulfilment of the word of the prophetess. *Thus again was deliverance and security wrought for Israel by Jehovah.*

(d) *Gideon* (6 to 8)

Raids of the Midianites (6 : 1-10)

Fickle as ever, the people fell away again from their fealty to Jehovah, and in chastisement—as a prophet arose to declare—for all their ingratitude and apostasy, he sent the Midianites to terrorize and ravage their land.

[1] Ch. 4, the prose story is founded mainly on the old poem preserved in 5.

The call of Gideon (6 : 11-24)

A divine call [1] to deliver Israel came to the mighty Gideon, as, in fear of the Midianites, he was threshing his wheat in the covert of a wine-press. All despondent as he contrasted with the forlornness of the present the miracles of God's grace in the olden time, and humbly doubting the divine impulse within him to champion his people's cause, he then and there received the assurance that, despite his fear, Jehovah would be with him and give him victory over the Midianites.

Clan summoned (6 : 34)

Thus encouraged and clothed in the spirit of Jehovah, he summoned his clan to resist the foe.

Gideon reassured (7 : 1, 9-15)

As Gideon, in doubt, surveyed the swarming foe beneath him, Jehovah reassured him by causing him to overhear a dream prophetic of the triumph of his little band.

The call (6 : 25-32)

In obedience to the divine call Gideon secretly destroyed the instruments of Baal worship, to the amazement and anger of the idolatrous villagers, who threatened him with death. But his father reminded them that Baal must be allowed to avenge his own quarrel. [2]

The signs (6 : 36-40)

Gideon, now the proved champion of Jehovah worship, was next called to deliver Israel from her foes. He hesitated and asked for a sign, once and again, and once and again did God graciously reassure him by granting it.

Tribes summoned (6 : 33, 35)

He then summoned his own tribe Manasseh, and three others to resist the hordes of Midian, Amalek, and the Bedawin.

Gideon's army reduced (7 : 2-8)

But the victory must be altogether God's, who needs no mighty host to execute his purpose. So first in one way and then in another, Gideon's forces were reduced to three hundred men.

[1] The Gideon story is duplicated practically throughout.

[2] Probably ironical in the mouth of the historian, but not of Joash.

The attack (7 : 16-22)

In bold confidence he led on his men to the attack at dead of night to the war-cry "For Jehovah and for Gideon:" and by a brilliant concerted stratagem[1] caused the enemy to flee in wild terror.

The pursuit. Chastisement of Succoth and Penuel (8 : 4-21)

Gideon, in pursuit of the retreating Midianites across the Jordan, received nothing but insolence from the men of Succoth and Penuel of whom he begged bread for his exhausted band. With threats of vengeance, he passed on, and overtook the unsuspecting Midianite camp, capturing their two kings, Zebah and Zalmunna. On his return he fulfilled his threats on the insolent cities, and then slew the haughty kings of Midian for the murder of his brother.

Gideon's ephod (8 : 24-27)

Of the enormous spoil, Gideon set up an oracular idol of gold at Ophrah, *which led Israel astray.*

The attack (7 : 16-22)

In confidence he led on his men to the attack at dead of night, and by a brilliant concerted stratagem,[2] the enemy were thrown into panic, in which they slew their own comrades and took to headlong flight.

The triumph. Quarrel with Ephraim (7 : 23 to 8 : 3)

Then the Ephraimites at Gideon's summons seized the fords to prevent the foe from crossing the Jordan. In this way the two chiefs of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb, were captured and slain. But the men of Ephraim bitterly upbraided Gideon for not having summoned them, the leading tribe, to the fray itself. He adroitly appeased them, however, by showing how much greater their share of the victory was than his.

Gideon refuses the kingship (8 : 22, 23)

The people asked him to become their king, but he refused. Jehovah was their king, he said, and should continue so to be.[3]

[1] Probably with the jars and torches.

[2] Probably with the trumpets (Moore).

[3] That the monarchy is an apostasy from Jehovah, Israel's true king, is also the view of 1 S. 8 : 7.

Thus Israel had rest through the deliverer whom God raised up: but as ever, the death of the leader was the signal for a fresh apostasy.

Gideon's death and Israel's apostasy (8 : 28, 33-35)

(e) *Abimelech* (9)

Abimelech is made king of Shechem (8 : 29-32; 9 : 1-21)

Gideon had a son Abimelech by a Shechemite concubine. On his father's death, Abimelech artfully induced the Shechemites to rid themselves of Israel's yoke by slaying Gideon's sons, and making him king. Was he not their own flesh and blood? The sons were slain, but Jotham the youngest escaped, and in a parable which illustrated the truth that it was only the worthless who were eager to reign, he pointed the moral of the Shechemite folly in creating such a king. As surely as Abimelech and the Shechemites had acted in bad faith toward his brave sire, so surely would they perish at each other's hands.

The Shechemites revolt, but are beaten (9 : 22-45)

Even so did God bring it about; for he makes it his task to avenge cruelty. Soon the Shechemites began to resent Abimelech's authority, for he was but a half Shechemite after all; and flushed with insolence, they rose in revolt against him, only to be crushed, however, by his clever strategy.[1]

Abimelech's death (9 : 46-55)

Thus did the traitors fall; Abimelech's turn was yet to come. With bold energy he proceeded with the final suppression of the rebellion—soon however to find his

[1] There are two versions of this story; one in 22-25 and 42-45; the other in 26-41.

doom : and only the sword of his armor-bearer saved him from finding it at the hands of a woman.

The Nemesis of treachery (9 : 56, 57)

Jotham's curse was thus fulfilled, for God wrought upon Abimelech and the Shechemites righteous retribution for their treacherous cruelty.

(f) *Jephthah* (10 : 17 to 12 : 7) [1]

Gileadites invite Jephthah to repel the Ammonite invasion (10 : 17 to 11 : 11)

Fickle as ever, the people again fell away from their fealty to Jehovah and again a divine instrument of punishment was raised up in the Ammonites, who raided Gilead on the east of the Jordan ; *and when Israel cried in penitence to Jehovah, in pity he sent them a deliverer* in Jephthah. This mighty man, a bastard son, who, banished by the elders of Gilead, had been living the life of a freebooter, was invited by the terrified elders to take the lead against Ammon. The proud chief consented, on their solemnly swearing to make him head of all Gilead.[2]

[1] For 10 : 1-5, two minor judges, Tola and Jair, cf. pp. 122, 123. For 10 : 6-16, cf. 2 : 7 to 3 : 6 with note.

[2] 12-28 is an interpolated section. "On the invasion, Jephthah sends messengers to remonstrate. The invaded country, he argued, had never belonged to the invaders; it had been in the undisputed possession of Israel for three hundred years, and was hers by the divine right of conquest. The *Moabite* king had not then disputed her claim, and she had never interfered with *Moab*, not even when in her wanderings she was tempted to do so ; nor should *Moab* now interfere with her. 'Let Jehovah judge.' But the king would not listen." This section deals with Moab, not with Ammon, and is therefore irrelevant ; it was probably inserted to justify Israel's claims to Gilead when attacked by Ammon in the beginning of the sixth century B. C. Jer. 49 : 1.

He vowed to sacrifice to Jehovah the first human thing that came out of his house to meet him, if he should bring him back victorious. Jehovah heard his prayer, but, horror! the first that met him was his only child, playing and dancing for joy at her father's victory. Nevertheless, the sad father would not break his stern vow to Jehovah, nor would the heroic maiden suffer him so to do, content to die for such a victory of God and of her sire over her people's foes. Then after two months, for which she entreated to bewail her maidenhood upon the mountains, her father fulfilled his vow upon her, and the memory of her abides in the yearly lamentations of the daughters of Israel.

Jephthah's vow and its fulfilment. An ancient thank offering and what it cost (11 : 29-40)

The leading tribe Ephraim, angrily threatened Jephthah for not summoning them to the fray.[1] They had been summoned, retorted Jephthah, and had refused. So he mustered his tribesmen, and they fought with Ephraim, and slew at the fords of the Jordan all who under false pretences sought to reach their homes across the river.[2]

Quarrel with Ephraim (12 : 1-7)

(g) *Samson* (13 to 16)

Fickle as ever, the people again fell away from their fealty to Jehovah, and a divine instrument of punishment was raised up in the Philistines. There arose also a deliverer, divinely called before his birth to be the votary

The birth of Samson (13)

[1] For a very similar story, cf. 8 : 1-3 (Gideon).

[2] For 12: 8-15, three minor judges, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, cf. pp. 122, 123.

of his God. The mother of the unborn child—so spake to her a voice divine—must in no wise defile herself; and the father, seeking to learn what the rule and manner of the child's life should be, worshipped the ineffable one who had thus strangely visited them. Not till then did he realize that in this visitation he had been face to face with God; and he was afraid. But his wife allayed his fear: for had God not graciously received their sacrifice? Then she bore a son, Samson, and the spirit of Jehovah began to stir him.

Samson's marriage with a Philistine woman (14)

Samson in time fell in love with a Philistine woman; but his parents refused their consent to his marriage with an alien, not knowing that this was Jehovah's way of involving the Philistine oppressors in trouble. As Samson was on his way to the woman's house, in an inspired frenzy he slew a lion that crossed his path. Being satisfied with the woman, he came home and returned afterward to his bride's home for the wedding feast. There he put forth a riddle which the guests only read by sternly importuning the woman to wring the answer from her husband. Then in an inspired frenzy he fulfilled his promise to the guests by slaying thirty Philistines, and he disgraced his Philistine wife by leaving her.

Its consequences to the Philistines (15)

After a while he returned, to find that his wife had been given to another, and in the grim humor of revenge he destroyed the Philistine corn. They savagely retaliated: Samson again took summary vengeance on them and re-

tired to Judah. The Philistines followed, demanded and secured his surrender; but, in the inspired frenzy which mastered him, he burst his strong bands, wrought a mighty slaughter, and was preserved from further peril by the grace of the God who answers prayer.

Samson at Gaza (16 : 1-3)

On a visit to another Philistine woman, Samson mocked the men who tried to entrap him, by carrying off the city gate upon his shoulders.

Samson and Delilah. The tragedy of passion (16 : 4-20)

With yet another Philistine woman he fell in love, and she was his undoing. Bribed by the Philistine lords, she besought him to tell her the secret of his great strength— the divine secret he so jealously guarded. Thrice he baffled her curiosity, and the lords were mocked; but at the last, vexed unto death, he told her. Then in the lap of love his strength was taken from him, and his God departed from him. The foemen blinded him and took him away to the town whose gates he had carried off ere his strength was shorn, and forced him to make sport for them at a sacrifice in the temple of Dagon their god, to whom they ascribed the victory. Then the mocked and eyeless hero prayed his God to grant him his old strength but once again, in vengeance for his eyesight. He thrust the pillars with all his might, and down fell the house, with lords and people. Thus the triumph of his death was greater than that of all his life.

Samson's fall and final triumph in death (16 : 21-31)

3. *Other Echoes from the Days of the Judges* (17 to 21)

(1) *Origin of the Sanctuary at Dan* (17 and 18)

Micah's idols and priest (17)

In the rude days of the judges, an Ephraimite called Micah was in possession of a shrine with an oracle and a costly image made of silver which had been stolen and cursed, and one of his sons he had installed as priest. But a wandering Levite who chanced upon his house, agreed to stay with him and become his priest, in return for a pittance of money and food—to the great delight of Micah; for such a presence was a guarantee of blessing.

Migration of the Danites to the north (18 : 1-29)

At that time the Danites, who could not gain a firm footing in the southwest, sent a party to explore the land, and lighting upon Micah's house in Ephraim, they consulted the Levite as to whether God approved of their enterprise. On receiving his assurance, they pushed on to the extreme north, and returned to their brethren with the news of the rich unwarlike people that were there. Thus encouraged, six hundred armed Danites started for the north; and, on the way, they constrained Micah's priest, nothing loth, to accompany them with his image and oracle. Was it not better, they said, to be priest to a tribe than to a single man? Micah and his neighbors, in amazement and despair at the loss of his gods and priest, pursued after the Danites, but were repulsed with rude threats. So with their precious acquisitions, the Danite warriors advanced north to Laish, now called Dan, which fell an easy prey.

The Danites set up the image. The grandson of Moses[1] was the first priest of the sanctuary, and his descendants held the priesthood till about 734 B. C.[2] Establishment of the sanctuary at Dan (18 : 30, 31)

(2) *Vengeance of Israel on Benjamin for the Outrage at Gibeah* (19 to 21)

In those rude days of the judges, a certain Levite had a concubine who one day left him for her father's house in Bethlehem. Thither he went to win her back again. Leaving Bethlehem together in the late afternoon, they reached the hostile Jebus—now Jerusalem—in the evening. Preferring to trust the hospitality of a city of Israel, they turned aside to Gibeah of Benjamin. Only a stranger, however, would take them in. So far were the vile townsmen from playing the part of host that their horrible lust had to be sated by the surrender of the concubine, whom they did to death ere it was morning. Then in righteous wrath at the infamy, unparalleled in Israel's history, the Levite cut the woman in twelve pieces and sent her throughout all the borders. A Levite's concubine ravished by Benjamites (19)

Then the whole **congregation**[3] of Israel, **four hundred thousand** men, mustered **as one man** in Mizpah of Benjamin. The Levite told his tale before them, and asked Israel resolves on vengeance. Benjamin nearly exterminated (20)

[1] Altered to "Manasseh" in later times, which were offended by the tracing of a priesthood, then regarded as idolatrous, to the grandson of Moses.

[2] This date is probable, but not certain.

[3] This story has been subjected to a priestly redaction, here marked in bold type. Cf. pp. 125, 126.

their counsel, and **as one man** they vowed vengeance. The Benjamites, who numbered about **twenty-six thousand** men, refused to deliver up the guilty ; so, after consulting the oracle, forth the men of Israel advanced against them, **Judah leading.** In the first assault they were repulsed with a loss of **twenty-two thousand** men, and again in a second, with a loss of **eighteen thousand.** Then with tears, fasting and sacrifice, they consulted the oracle again ; and success was assured them. This time by strategy the men of Benjamin were defeated with a loss of **twenty-five thousand one hundred** [1] men. Their cities were burned, and but few escaped.

Measures taken to preserve the tribe (21)

Not till the battle was over did Israel realize what they had done. To their sorrow a tribe was on the way to extinction ; for they had solemnly vowed not to give their daughters in marriage to the survivors of Benjamin, and the women of Benjamin had all been slain. To preserve the tribe, **they sent a force to destroy the inhabitants of Jabesh in Gilead for their refusal to take part in the war, and to secure the maidens as wives for the men of Benjamin. Yet even so there were not maidens enough. Then** they urged the Benjamites to seize the girls who came out to dance in the vintage festival at the sanctuary of Shiloh. Thus the tribe was preserved. **All this was in the rude days of the judges.**

[1] In the older story 18,000 (cf. v. 44).

VII

COMPOSITION AND CONTENTS OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL

Duplicates in the books of Samuel

The Books of Samuel, like those that precede them, are composite. Not to the same extent, however. There is at least one long section practically homogeneous (2 S. 9 to 20); but the compositeness of the remainder is rendered certain by the presence of the usual duplicates and contradictions. Of the duplicates, the most striking is that in which David waives his opportunity to take Saul's life (1 S. 24 and 26), where the situation, the language, even the metaphors are very similar, and there is no allusion in the second narrative to the first, as there surely must have been, had the occasions been different. A similar illustration on a smaller scale is the two-fold origin of the proverb: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"[1]

Contradictions

Of the contradictions, the most conspicuous and important is that found in the conception of the monarchy. One source, the earlier—that, too, which represents Samuel as a seer—regards the kingdom as a blessing and a gift of Jehovah: the first king is anointed by divine commission "to be prince over my people Israel, and he shall save my people out of the hands of the Philistines."[2] The other source regards the popular request for a king as an implicit

[1] 1 S. 10: 11 and 19: 24. [2] 9: 16.

rejection of Jehovah,[1] and the monarchy as destined to prove a vexation, if not a curse.[2] Very striking, too, are the mutually exclusive accounts of David's introduction to Saul.[3] In one he is a man of war (1 S. 16 : 18) whom Saul soon learns to love (v. 21). In the next chapter, he is a shepherd apparently unacquainted with war (17 : 28) and Saul knows nothing whatever about him (17 : 56). A meeting of Saul and Samuel is recorded[4] after the definite announcement that Samuel saw Saul no more.[5] There are two conflicting traditions of the death of Goliath : one that he was slain by David,[6] the other, by Elhanan.[7] In 2 Samuel 14 : 27, Absalom has three sons ; in 18 : 18 he has none. Further, there are two accounts of the death of Saul : one that he committed suicide ;[8] the other that he was slain by an Amalekite.[9]

The various sources

It is important to try to separate these sources ; and when we have done so, we appear to be left with ultimate elements of varying historical worth : a biography of Samuel, a very early biography of Saul which took quite a favorable view of that monarch, a very early and, in large part, extremely well-informed biography of David, and a history written between two and three centuries later, when the vexations and the religious impotence of the monarchy

[1] 8 : 7. [2] 8 : 11 ff. [3] 16 : 14-23 and 17 : 55-58. [4] 19 : 24.
[5] 15 : 35. [6] 17 : 51. [7] 2 S. 21 : 19. [8] 1 S. 31 : 4.
[9] 2 S. 1 : 10. Of course, the Amalekite's story may be a fiction, but it is not necessary to suppose this.

were beginning to be apparent. Even long after these constituents were welded into a literary unity, the book received some touches from a priestly hand, as we see from 1 Samuel 6 : 15 with its belated introduction of the Levites to do what had already been done (v. 14), and still more clearly from the substitution of "all the Levites" for "Abiathar" in 2 Samuel 15 : 24 (cf. vv. 29, 35, and 17 : 15). The last four chapters (2 S. 21 to 24) which interrupt the connection between chapter 20 and 1 Kings 1 are clearly no part of the original book. They contain two narratives, two psalms, and certain lists, and were no doubt designed to preserve memorable material which had not found a place in the history proper.

Samuel is the link that binds together the period of the judges and that of the monarchy. Himself a judge—on one view at least—he launched Israel's first king on his strange career. The graphic story of the Bible need not be here anticipated; only its more salient features may be noticed. Saul seems, at the first glance, great enough to found a monarchy. A splendid man physically, he has impressive qualities of heart to match. He must surely have been a lovable man, for whose dead body the men of Jabesh were willing to risk their lives, and over whom the man whom he had hunted almost to the death sang the most touching elegy that has ever celebrated human worth. Yet the deliberate judgment of a later day was that God had rejected him, and a study of his character confirms

Saul

the justice of that view. His undoubted power was paralyzed by jealousy. He could not bear about him a younger man who was his match or his superior. "Saul hath slain his thousands, David his tens of thousands." Jealousy bred suspicion; suspicion, malice; and this, working upon his predisposition to melancholy, led him to ruin. Not such as he could found a kingdom of God.

David

Very different was the man whom Providence called to that high honor. Not without tragic faults, yet a true prince of God. Tender as a woman to the friend he loves, generous to his foes, fearless in every venture and resourceful in every difficulty, master of war and song—all who come near him feel his strange charm. Brave men will lay down their lives for him, if need be; when his fortunes are low, foreign soldiers are willing to stand by him for better, for worse, and old men are glad to give him of their best. Religion, too, is a great reality to this man—how great we can see from his eagerness to build Jehovah a house, and from the deference he pays to the word of the prophet. His hope is in God, therefore threatened mutiny does not paralyze his initiative.[1] His darkest hours are brightened by his faith in God,[2] who, he is convinced, doeth all things well, and he meekly accepts his discipline.[3] The hand that leads him through his fortunes is indeed very stern. The consequences of his great sin pursue him like an avenging spirit. But his countrymen were right when

[1] 1 S. 30 : 6. [2] 2 S. 16 : 12. [3] 2 S. 16 : 10 and 15 : 25, 26.

they believed that it was he who was the chosen of Jehovah. Before him the national feeling created by Moses had been gravely imperilled, if not almost destroyed, by the disintegrated life of the period of the judges. It was he who by his genius, both for war and peace, consolidated the scattered interests of the people, recreated the nation, and gave them a not inconspicuous place among the peoples of the world.

VIII

THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY

1. *Samuel* (1 S. 1 to 15)

(1) *Samuel and the War with the Philistines* (1 to 7)

(a) *Samuel's Birth and Call* (1 : 1 to 4 : 1a)

Birth and consecration of Samuel (1)

During the priesthood of Eli and his sons at Jehovah's sanctuary in Shiloh, Hannah, a devout woman, vexed unto tears at her long barrenness, beloved by her husband, but taunted by his rival wife, and grievously misjudged by the priest who watched her murmured prayer, was at last blessed by God to be the mother of Israel's seer-prophet. In her child Samuel she saw an answer to her prayer, and when she had weaned him she gave him over to God's perpetual service in his house, in accordance with her vow.

Now Eli's sons were corrupt priests, claiming with in-

Foil to the corrupt priesthood (2 : 12-21)

solent violence an unlawful share of the sacrifices. But in touching contrast to their dread impiety was the gentle ministration of the child Samuel.

Eli's ineffectual rebuke (2 : 22-26)

The aged Eli did indeed remonstrate with his godless sons. "What intercession," he urged, "could save a man from the vengeance of offended God?" But his words fell upon heedless ears, and doom was inevitable. Far other was it with Samuel, who grew in favor with God and man.

Prophetic threat of doom. "Thou mayest be no longer steward" (2 : 27-36)

A man of God announced divine judgment upon Eli's house. "God," he said, "deals with men as they with him. Impiously unfaithful to the priestly trust committed to that house in Egypt, it would forfeit that trust, and give place to a faithful priest,[1] *whose descendants would abide before the king for ever, and from whom Eli's posterity would be glad to earn a pittance by some menial service in the sanctuary."*[2]

Samuel's call and influence (3 : 1 to 4 : 1a)

In a day when divine voices were rare, God's call came to Samuel, while yet a child, ministering in the sanctuary. Thrice he failed to recognize as God's the voice which called him, and whose call he instantly obeyed. But, soon as he knew the voice to be God's, it uttered a clear stern message of doom upon Eli's impious house. With

[1] Zadok is in view, appointed by Solomon in the place of Abiathar (1 K. 2 : 27).

[2] Reference to the country priests after the reform of Josiah (cf. 2 K. 23 : 9; Dt. 18 : 6-8).

devout resignation the old man heard God's word from the trembling child lips. "It is Jehovah," said he, "let him do what seemeth him good." As Samuel grew, all Israel knew him to be a prophet of Jehovah whose word was sure, and they flocked to Shiloh for the divine message that was his.

(b) *War with the Philistines* (4 : 1b to 7 : 17)

The defeat (4 : 1b-22)

Repulsed in battle with the Philistines (who had oppressed them in the days of Samson), Israel sought to ensure success in the future by bringing into battle the ark of their God. Its coming rejoiced the Israelites, but struck terror into the hearts of the Philistines who had heard of the plagues with which this God had smitten the Egyptians. Even the ark, however, did not save Israel from crushing defeat; it was itself captured, and the wicked priests thereof were slain. Tremblingly did the aged Eli wait for news of the ark; and when he heard of its capture, he fell back and died. His son's wife also died in childbirth, in sorrow for her dead, for the captured ark and the vanished glory of Israel.

Jehovah's dignity sustained in Philistia (5)

In triumph, the Philistines set the captured ark by the side of their god Dagon, in his sanctuary at Ashdod; but in the morning, lo! he lay broken and prostrate before Jehovah's ark in obeisance to a mightier than he. The people, too, were plagued with tumors. Ascribing their evil plight to the power of Israel's God, they sent the ark

on to Gath and Ekron, where it worked still more havoc and terror.

The ark returns to Israel (6:1 to 7:1)

On the advice of the Philistine diviners, loth to see their people repeat the folly of Egyptian obstinacy, the ark was allowed to go back to the land of Israel with a trespass offering by way of recompense — five golden tumors,[1] one for each of the Philistine towns. It reached Bethshemesh to the great joy of the harvesters, and the cattle that drove the cart were offered in grateful sacrifice. But soon the joy was overcast, for the indifference of certain men[2] provoked Jehovah to destroy some[3] of them. In their terror of the holy and perilous presence of Jehovah, they sent on the ark to Kirjath-jearim, where a certain Eleazar was consecrated to keep it.

Samuel's intercession; deliverance of the people (7:2-17)

Since, then, the ark was in the land again, Samuel seized the occasion to prevail upon the people to give up all the foreign gods, and serve Jehovah only, and at a great gathering summoned by the prophet the contrite people confessed their sin. Their solemn gathering, however, was troubled by the rumor of the Philistine advance. But the prayer of Samuel was mightier than

[1] The mice appear to represent another version of the plague, and consequently of the offerings. Both were subsequently combined, as we see here, and still more clearly in the LXX.

[2] The LXX has the interesting and probable reading: "the sons of Jeconiah were not glad with the men of Bethshemesh."

[3] 50,070. Both the number and the grammar are suspicious; probably we should read only 70.

the alien hosts. For he interceded for his people on their earnest entreaty, and in answer Jehovah with his thunderstorm confounded the foe, and they were routed by Israel. *Samuel* set up a stone in witness of Jehovah's victory which secured peace for Israel from the Philistines *all his days!*[1] In divers sanctuaries did Samuel administer justice, chiefly at his home in Ramah, where he had built an altar to Jehovah.

(2) *Israel's First King* (8 to 15)[2]

A

In search of stray asses, a young man named Saul, of mighty stature, chanced upon the spot where a sacred

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B

Provoked by the venality of Samuel's sons, his successors in the administration of justice, the elders asked Samuel to make them like their neighbors by appointing them a king. With a sore heart Samuel took their request to God in prayer. For Jehovah was King of Israel: to ask for another was to reject Jehovah himself; and the choice

The demand for a king is the rejection of Jehovah (8)

[1] Not so the older sources (cf. 9 : 16 and 14 : 52).

[2] The paraphrase, from this point to 2 S. 1, follows the analysis of Professor H. P. Smith, in the *International Critical Commentary* on Samuel. A and B are themselves most probably the result of compilation. B, though containing facts which, sometimes contradictory of A, are often quite compatible with it, is obviously, in the main, the less historical of the two narratives.

A

The king a gift of God. Saul anointed by Samuel (9 : 1 to 10 : 1)

festival was about to be conducted by Samuel the prophet, or "seer," as he used to be called—one who for a fee would reveal what men desired to know; and the seer was led by a divine impulse to recognize in Saul the king to be. For, in pity for his people galled by the Philistine yoke, Jehovah had sent in him a captain to save them. So this searcher for asses, after royal entertainment at the hands of Samuel, was anointed king by the will of God.

Saul among the prophets (10 : 2-16)

To reassure and confirm him, Samuel gave him three signs, all full of meaning, but most of all the third. According to this, he was to join a band of ecstatic proph-

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B

of a human king would cost them many a sorrow. It would mean the loss of liberty and land, and heavy taxation to maintain the court; and no repentance could avert this doom. But the people, heedless of Samuel's expostulation, clamored for a king.

Saul acclaimed king (10 : 17-27)

Samuel, reminding them publicly in Mizpah that their demand was at once an ingratitude and an apostasy, proceeded to his fateful task. By the sacred lot, the king to be was discovered—a modest man of mighty stature—and his presence was hailed with shouts of royal welcome.

Now that a king had been appointed, the hoary Samuel, whose work as judge was done, spoke his farewell words

A

ets, and, touched by their enthusiasm, he was, in the assurance of divine help, to seize his opportunity to control and guide it into a movement for the deliverance of his people. The interview with Samuel made another man of Saul. To the surprise of all—a surprise which passed into a proverb [1]—he joined the prophetic band, and was touched by their spirit. But on his return, he said not a word to his uncle about the kingdom.

The occasion finds the man. Saul defeats the Ammonites and is crowned king (11)

Soon Saul's opportunity [2] came. The Ammonites attacked Jabesh in Gilead and would accept its surrender only on barbarous terms. Jabesh appealed to Israel; the people could answer only with the tears of despair. Saul,

B

Samuel's farewell address: a retrospect and a prospect (12)

to the people. He asserted unchallenged his unswerving integrity. He reminded the people how, from the days of old in Egypt on to his own day, God had always raised up deliverers for them when they turned to him in penitence. But lo! in the terror of the recent Ammonite invasion they had clamored for a king, forgetting that their God was their king. Even yet, however, in spite of their wicked demand for a king, all would be well if they would obey and serve their God: but rebellion would call down his judgment. In proof whereof, he appealed to the thunderstorm, which miraculously broke, at his word, from the

[1] The proverb has another setting in 19:24. [2] Cf. 10:7.

A

however, in the freshness of his new enthusiasm, peremptorily summoned a levy of all Israel, attacked and utterly routed the Ammonites. Then in recognition of his kingly deed, the people made him king[1] in Gilgal and held a religious festival of coronation.

Successful attack on the Philistines (13 : 1-7a, 15b-23; 14 : 1-23)

The king now set himself to his real task of expelling the Philistines. His son Jonathan opened the war by a successful attack on a Philistine garrison. The enemy then ravaged the land in three directions, and Saul had but six hundred men. Though the forces were thus reduced,[2] however, the brave Jonathan was in no wise dispirited.

B

summer sky. In fear the people acknowledged their sin, and entreated Samuel's intercession. He comforted them, warned them against apostasy, and encouraged them by reminding them of Jehovah's great purpose in making them his people.[3]

Soon the truth of Samuel's words touching the king

[1] "*Renew* the kingdom" (v. 14) is a redactional attempt to reconcile the two versions of the story.

[2] "And disarmed," this is the substance of verses 19-22. The text of this section, however, is corrupt, and the section itself probably an interpolation.

[3] This chapter is in the main, obviously Deuteronomic. It has not been printed in italics, however, because it forms part of a history all of which is, in its present form, late, though it could not all be strictly called Deuteronomic.

A

With complete confidence in Israel's God, who could save by few as by many, and supported only by his armor-bearer, he committed himself, at a given omen, to the perilous attack, and together they wrought havoc among the foe. Then followed a heaven-sent panic which induced Saul to consult the oracle and make the attack with his main body without waiting for an answer—so opportune was the moment—and his victory was complete.

To retain the manifest favor of Jehovah, Saul ordained a fast for that day till sunset, and laid a curse upon any who ate food. Jonathan, who had not heard his father's

The taboo (14 : 24-35)

B

proved too fatally clear. In the name of Jehovah, he had bidden Saul devote to destruction the whole of Amalek, man and beast, for their ancient unkindness to Israel,[1] warning the friendly Kenites[2] to depart. Saul, however, in wilful disobedience to the divine word, spared the king and the best of the cattle, and defended himself from the rebuke of Samuel by an absurd evasion. For his disobedience—a sin as dread as soothsaying—Samuel solemnly pronounced his rejection by the God whose word he had rejected.[3]

The rejection of Saul (15 : 1-23)

[1] Cf. Ex. 17 : 8-16. [2] Cf. Jud. 1 : 16.

[3] Another and less satisfactory version of the rejection—though the two have much in common—is to be found in 13 : 7^{b}-15^{a}. There Saul, after waiting the time appointed by Samuel, offered sacrifice himself. The ground

A

curse, partook of some tempting honey. The long fast had impaired the fighting vigor of the troops, to the sorrow of the outspoken Jonathan; and at sunset, the famished men flew upon the captured animals, and devoured them—blood and all, which was sinful; for the blood was Jehovah's and should have been poured out to him. So the scrupulous Saul erected a stone altar and had the animals slaughtered there, that Jehovah might get his portion.

Jonathan delivered by the people from death (14:36-46, 52)

Before renewing the attack, Saul consulted the oracle, at the suggestion of the priest; but there was no response. Then Saul knew that there was sin somewhere; so he

B

Saul's unavailing confession (15:24-31)

Fervently did Saul confess his sin and entreat pardon. For answer Samuel pronounced the same stern words of doom, and turned to go. In despair, Saul caught hold of his skirt, and it rent. "Even so," said Samuel, "hath the immutable God of Israel rent thy kingdom and given it to thy neighbor, who is better than thou." But he left him the semblance of kingly honor.[1]

Samuel devotes Agag to destruction (15:32-35)

Then, sword in hand, Samuel himself at the sanctuary executed upon the surviving king of Israel's foes the cruel

of his rejection in not "keeping the commandment of Jehovah," is not very intelligible, as he kept the only commandment given, at least recorded, v. 8.

[1] This section, which is unnecessary to the sense, and perhaps contradicts the context (cf. v. 29 with v. 11), may be an interpolation. Samuel's slaughter of Agag would fitly follow his word of doom.

A

sternly set himself by the use of the lot[1] to find out the sinner, and lo! it was Jonathan, who by his eating had fallen under Saul's curse. The father would have had him slain; but the people, knowing that to him, under God, the victory was due, saved him. The Philistines then retired. But there continued to be sore war between them and Israel, all the days of the life of Saul; and whenever Saul saw any mighty man, it was his custom to attach him to his body-guard.

Saul waged divers wars and was victorious against his enemies on every side, and Abner was his general. He

Saul's wars and family (14 : 47-51)

B

judgment which he deserved. Thus far the ban was completed; and Saul and Samuel parted.

Saul had been rejected: the destined man is David. Once more it is Samuel who is charged with the high mission of finding and anointing the king. Against his judgment and expectation, he was divinely led to the choice of David, the youngest son of Jesse, a ruddy shepherd boy. From the day of David's anointing the spirit of Jehovah came upon him.

David anointed (16 : 1-13)

Now the Philistines invaded Israel, and their giant champion Goliath offered a challenge to single combat

His victory over Goliath (17 : 1 to 18 : 5)

[1] The LXX of v. 41 makes it clear that the Urim and the Thummim were the means employed.

A

had also sons and daughters whose names bore witness to his piety.[1]

2. *Saul and David* (1 S. 16 to 2 S. 1)

David at the court (16 : 14-23)

Saul was afflicted with a mental malady, and his servants recommended him to procure a skilful minstrel to soothe and heal the distemper. Such an one he found in the warrior David, the wise and comely. Saul loved him and was soothed by his minstrelsy.

Saul's attempt to get rid of David (18 : 6-30)

David's military success, extolled by the women in song, roused the anger and jealousy of Saul, and he sought to get rid of the man whom he feared.[2] So first he gave him

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B

which threw Israel—king and people—into consternation.[3] But David accepted the challenge and sought to sustain Saul's heart by tales of his shepherd life, in which many a

[1] This section has all the appearance of having stood later in the original narrative. V. 52 follows 46, and appears to be immediately followed by 16 : 14-23.

[2] Vv. 10, 11, duplicate and anticipate 19 : 9, 10. Besides being psychologically inappropriate at so early a stage, they are omitted in a very important MS. of the LXX (Vatican).

[3] The Greek MS., which omits 18 : 10, 11, also omits 17 : 12-31, together with 17 : 55 to 18 : 5 and also 18 : 17-19 which depends upon 17 : 25. With those omissions, most of the inconsistencies of the narrative disappear. The omitted passages were probably taken from a lost biography of David, and inserted, at a late date, in the books of Samuel.

A

a perilous post of honor in the army. Then, as that but added fresh lustre to his name, he took advantage of his daughter Michal's affection for him, to expose him to the risk of a raid on the Philistines; but again he was triumphant. So Saul gave her to him in marriage.

On his wedding night the jealous king sent men to slay him: but, by the ready wit of his wife, who substituted for him an oracular image, he made good his escape unarmed. David escapes (19 : 11-17)

On reaching Nob, a sanctuary near Jerusalem, he induced the startled priest, by his adroitness and his regard for the demands of religion, to give him some bread, consecrated though it was, and Goliath's sword. David is received by Ahimelech the priest (21 : 1-9)

B

time he had slain a lion and a bear; the living God who had delivered him then, would surely deliver him now, he said, from this profane uncircumcised braggart, who defied his hosts. With no weapons, then, but sling and stones and faith in Jehovah the God of Israel's hosts, who could save without sword or spear, he laid the giant low and showed the world that Israel had a God. The Philistines were utterly routed.

Saul, however, incited Jonathan and all his servants to remove David by assassination. But Jonathan, who loved David, woke a tender chord in his father's heart, by reminding him of the service he had rendered the people in Saul's enmity and Jonathan's successful intercession (19 : 1-7)

A

He and his band at Adullam (22 : 1, 2)

Then he betook him to a stronghold in western Judah, where he gathered about him a band of desperate and embittered men.

The murder of the priests at the command of Saul (22 : 6-23)

Saul, upbraiding his courtiers for their foolish and disloyal interest in David, the penniless adventurer, was at once informed by Doeg that David had received practical aid and religious guidance from the priest at Nob. Ahimelech admitted the charge, but avowed the innocence of his intention and the loyalty of David. Nevertheless, he and all the priests of the city were slain in cold blood, at the command of Saul, by Doeg; for the body-guard refused, deeming the priests inviolable. Only one escaped

B

slaying Goliath. So for the time, David was continued at court.[1]

[1] This seems to be a duplicate of the story in ch. 20, though that chapter cannot easily be fitted into the other document, any more than into this one. It may originally have belonged to a separate biography, such as that which we found to be represented in the Hebrew of chs. 17 and 18, though absent from the Greek. It will be noticed that in ch. 20, as against 19 : 1-7, Jonathan's friendship is unavailing. The substance of the chapter is as follows: "David disclosed to the trusty Jonathan his father's murderous designs against him. Jonathan, unwilling to believe it, yet vowed to do all he could for him in accordance with their plighted troth (cf. 18 : 1-5). They planned that David should go into hiding for a day or two, and that Jonathan should pretend to his father that he had gone to keep a sacred festival of his clan at Bethlehem. This excuse would test Saul's attitude toward him, and, by a preconcerted sign, Jonathan was to indicate to David whether to

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—Abiathar; David, the cause of the slaughter, vowed to protect him, and in this way came to have access to the oracle.

After consulting the oracle, David attacked and defeated the Philistines who were plundering Keilah. There the implacable Saul purposed to capture him; but, by the advice of the oracle, he retired with his band to the wilderness.[1] Again did Saul, being informed of his whereabouts, seek to hunt him down, and all but had him; but he was miraculously preserved by another Philistine raid, which called off the attention of Saul.

Saul hunts David (23)

Hearing that the wealthy Nabal was holding festival at

B

Subsequent successes of David, however, so inflamed Saul's jealousy that he hurled his spear at him with intent to pin him to the wall; but David escaped to Samuel's home in Ramah, where he was miraculously protected from the vindictiveness of Saul.

Saul's attempt on David's life, and David's escape to Ramah (19: 8-10, 18-24)

flee or stay. At Jonathan's plea for David's absence, Saul's jealous anger blazed forth, and he cast a spear at his son. In sorrow and wrath, Jonathan went forth and gave David the sign for instant flight." Vv. 40-42 are a certain interpolation. The terms of the preceding verses, rightly understood, imply that Jonathan dare not be seen in David's company.

[1] Vv. 15-18, describing the interview and covenant between Jonathan and David, appear to be an interpolation. The covenant has already been made: 20: 8, cf. 18: 3.

A

The ways of David and his band. He marries Abigail and Ahinoam (25)

the sheep-shearing, David requested some provision from him for his band, urging that, so far from plundering his shepherds, as they might have done, his men had actually protected them. The churlish Nabal insolently refused. At once David and his men girt on their swords for vengeance. But Abigail, the wife of Nabal, with prompt and gracious tact, disarmed his wrath by bringing a costly present, and expressing a desire for his welfare, with the hope that she would be remembered when he came to his own. In her coming David saw a divine interposition, and also in the death of the "foolish" Nabal,[1] which

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He flees to Gath (21 : 10-15)

Thence he passed to Achish, King of Gath. The Philistine courtiers, however, were naturally suspicious of the slayer of Goliath, and prudence compelled him to leave.[2]

Removes his parents to Moab (22 : 3-5)

For safety, David put his parents in charge of the king of Moab.

Spares Saul (24)

No sooner was Saul returned from his pursuit of the Philistines than he renewed his hunt of David. But Jehovah was preserving him ; and Saul fell into David's power so completely that he could have slain him at a blow, and he had much to do to restrain his men. But he would

[1] V. 25. *Nabhal* (fool) is his name, and *nebhalah* (folly) is with him.

[2] This section is parallel to ch. 27 in the main fact of David's appearance at the court of Achish.

A

speedily followed his debauch. Then David took Abigail to wife, and also Ahinoam, Saul having given Michal to another.

David spared Saul's life when Abishai was eager to take it (26).[1]

David serves Achish of Gath, and wins his confidence (27:1 to 28:2)

In ceaseless terror of his life, David offered his services and those of his band to the Philistine Achish. Receiving from him a border town, Ziklag, he waged extermi-nating war on the neighboring Bedawin tribes; but, by pretending that his raids were really upon the clans of Judah, he so won the confidence of Achish that that king sum-

B

not put forth his hand against Jehovah's anointed. He trusted in God to justify and finally deliver him, contenting himself with carrying off a trophy which proved what he might have done; and even for that his heart accused him. His unexpected magnanimity moved Saul to tears, and something of his old nobleness gleams through his contrite words. Foreseeing that the future lay with David, he entreated him to spare his posterity, and not blot out his name; and David sware.[2]

When Samuel was dead, the Philistines mustered their

[1] Duplicated in ch. 24.

[2] This chapter is parallel in the main to 26, which is probably the older source.

A

moned his aid for the projected war with Israel, and made him captain of his body-guard. David guardedly promised to let his power be felt.

David is finally dismissed (29)

He accompanied the Philistines to the plain of Esdraelon. But his presence excited the not unnatural suspicion and anger of the Philistine lords, who compelled Achish, despite his assertions of David's fidelity, reluctantly and courteously to dismiss him.[1]

Amalekites attack Ziklag. David recovers the spoil (30 : 1-20)

So David returned to Ziklag, only to find that the town had been burnt and the women and children captured—as he providentially learned—by the Amalekites who had attacked Philistia and Judah. A threatened mutiny of his

B

The end of disobedience is death. Saul's doom pronounced by the shade of Samuel (28 : 3-25)

hosts, and in terror Saul sought the will of God; but there came no answer, through dream or priest or prophet. Then in despair he betook him to a witch—he who had erstwhile sought to root out all such—that through her he might wring a word of counsel from the dead Samuel. Howbeit, no word had he, when he rose, for the God-forsaken king, but one of stern doom for the old disobedience—defeat and death. Then, sore against his will, the troubled king was constrained to take a morsel of food, and forth he fared in the night to his doom.

[1] This departure is clearly a parallel to that implied in 21 : 10-15. It is similarly motived in both cases. The other story sets David in a less pleasing light.

A

own men did not daunt the heart of David, for his trust was in his God. With all speed he consulted the oracle, overtook and routed the foe, recovering all that had been lost, with much booty.

Now some of the unprincipled spirits who had taken part in the pursuit, proposed that those who had been too faint to help them should have no share in the booty. But David rebuked the proposal as an injustice and an ingratitude to the God who had graciously given them the victory ; henceforth it became the law—that all should share alike.[1] Out of the spoil, David sent presents to the neighboring clans, with a view to securing their friendship.

The law of booty (30 : 21-31)

B

For in the battle on Gilboa Israel was defeated and Saul took his own life. The Philistines put his armor in the temple of their goddess, and fastened his headless body to a wall ; but the men of Jabesh, whom Saul had succored on the threshold of his career, with the boldness of gratitude, stole his body from the insolent foe and buried the bones in their own town with mourning.

The doom fulfilled (31)

When David heard of it, he invoked a blessing on them, and promised to requite them.

David blesses the men of Jabesh (2 S. 2 : 4b-7)

[1] This law, here conceived as rising out of David's ruling, is characteristically carried back by the priestly historian to Mosaic precedent (Num. 31 : 27). It is interesting, however, to find that there, too, it is associated with a historical or quasi-historical incident. The two passages throw suggestive light on the origin of Israel's legislation, and its relation to history.

A

The death of Saul (2 S. 1 : 1-18)

It was Amalek that had lately wronged David ; and it was an Amalekite that brought to him in Ziklag word of the issue of the battle of Israel against the Philistines, and of the death of Saul and Jonathan : Saul, he said, he had slain with his own hand. But not welcome were these tidings to the noble soul of David. In grief and anger, he had the stranger put to death, for that he had destroyed Jehovah's anointed ;[1] and he lamented over Saul and his beloved Jonathan in an elegy that is preserved in the Book of the Brave.

3. *King David* (2 S. 2 to 1 K. 2)

(1) *In Hebron* (2 S. 2 to 4)

David, King of Judah (2 : 1-4a)

On the advice of the oracle, David and his soldier band went up to Hebron, where the men of his own tribe, Judah, anointed him their king.

Struggle between David and Ishbaal (2 : 8 to 3 : 1)

Saul had perished, but not his kingdom ; for his son, Ishbaal,[2] supported by Abner, Saul's general, maintained it in northern Israel, while David enjoyed the allegiance of Judah. Thus war between the rival kings was inev-

[1] Cf. 24 : 6, 10 and 26 : 9, 11, 16, 23.

[2] This, which means "man of Baal," was certainly his original name (cf. 1 Chr. 8 : 33). In earlier times, Jehovah could also be called Baal. In 1 S. 14 : 49, this same man is called Ishvi, which stands for "man of Jehovah." But later ages, to which the word Baal was distasteful (cf. Hos. 2 : 16, 17), usually turned it into "bosheth" (= shame) when it appeared in proper names. So here "man of shame."

itable. In the battle of Gibeon, David's men were victorious; but in the pursuit the fleet Asahel, brother of David's general Joab, was slain by Abner, though not without repeated warning; for Abner was loth to provoke the blood feud that must follow. Pressed by the long pursuit, Abner called on the relentless Joab to stay his men; it were a horrible thing to wipe out a brother clan. So he checked the pursuit. The armies disbanded to their respective quarters with heavy loss on Israel's side; and David's cause grew stronger and stronger.

Abner slain by Joab (3:6-39)

During the war, Abner usurped Ishbaal's royal prerogative by taking to himself one of Saul's concubines. Irritated by Ishbaal's remonstrance, he at once offered to procure for David Israel's allegiance—an offer which David accepted on condition that his former wife Michal be restored to him;[1] and David dismissed Abner in peace. But, peace notwithstanding, the stern Joab, boldly upbraiding the king for failing to avenge his slain kinsman,[2] and imputing treachery to Abner's offer, cunningly slew him and so avenged his brother. David was sorely grieved at the death of this his former foe. With tears and fasting, he protested his own innocence, invoked a curse on the murderer's house, and in an elegy lamented the hero who had met so dishonored a doom. Custom was in-

[1] This might further help to cement the bond between the two kingdoms.

[2] Nephew. Abishai, Joab, and Asahel were sons of Zeruiah, David's sister (1 Chr. 2:16).

deed on the side of the murderer; but "may Jehovah," he prayed, "requite the evildoer!"

Ishbaal assassinated (4)

Ishbaal's cause was now tottering. The heir next to him, Meribbaal,[1] Jonathan's son, was a cripple. Two guerilla captains seized their opportunity to remove the feeble king. They stole upon him while taking his siesta, assassinated him, and carried his head in triumph to David. But they had reckoned without their host. For reward, David had them slain, mutilated and hanged, and the head of Ishbaal was buried in Abner's tomb.

(2) *In Jerusalem* (2 S. 5 to 1 K. 2)

(a) *Years of Prosperity* (2 S. 5 to 10)

David king over all Israel (5 : 1-5)

Union was now possible. The elders of Israel offered David their allegiance in Hebron, and anointed him king over Israel.

Philistine attack and defeat (5 : 17-25, and 21 : 15-22)

Naturally this union excited the alarm of the Philistines, who advanced to the valley of Rephaim, near Jerusalem. Twice, by the help of Jehovah, they were repulsed by David, who attacked on the advice of the oracle; and four of David's mighty men slew four Philistine champions in single combat.

David's capture of Jerusalem; growing success (5 : 6-16; 3 : 2-5)

This campaign, however, made it clear that if the two kingdoms were to be really one, Jerusalem, then the mighty stronghold of the Jebusites, must be taken.

[1] His real name (cf. 1 Chr. 8 : 34; 9 : 40) changed to Mephibosheth. See note on Ishbaal, p. 162.

Taunted by its defenders, David assailed and took the all but impregnable fortress and called it the city of David. His growing success won him the friendship of the trading King of Tyre, and was marked by an increase of his harem beyond that which he had enjoyed in Hebron.

Removal of the ark to Jerusalem (6 : 1-19)

Now that David had a capital, he was eager to find a place therein for the recognition of Jehovah, the God of Israel's hosts. So he planned to bring the ark up thither from the place where it was.[1] The rejoicings were worthy of the great occasion; but soon they were overcast. An accident on the way cost the life of Uzzah the overbold, and David, in fear of the inscrutable Jehovah, would take the ark no farther then, but turned it aside to the house of one of his Philistine body-guard. The manifest blessing that fell upon this man's house rekindled David's hope and purpose, and with great gladness the ark was brought up to the city of David. The king blessed the people, and dismissed them to their homes with gifts of food.

Michal's taunt (6 : 20-23)

The public rejoicing, however, was marred by domestic bitterness. Michal met her husband with words of sarcasm for the shamelessness into which the excess of his joy had betrayed him. It was, replied David, religious joy—in honor of the God who had chosen him above her father; his zeal would not be misunderstood. From that day Michal was childless.

[1] 1 S. 7 : 1.

David's wars (8 : 1-14)

By the help of Jehovah, David's arms were successful on every side—against Philistia, Moab, Aram,[1] Edom, and elsewhere.[2] The spoil he dedicated to the God who had prospered him.

David's court (8 : 15-18)

Besides being ruler in war, he also superintended the administration of justice, and court officials presided over various departments of state.

Promise of an everlasting kingdom (7)

David now resolved to build a worthy house for the God who had given him victory and rest; and at first he received the approval of Nathan the prophet whom he consulted. But afterward Nathan was divinely commissioned to forbid him. Jehovah desired no such house from David—such was Nathan's message; *but, in continuance of his past abounding kindness to him and his people, he would build David a house, even a dynasty that would know no end. He would himself be a father to his seed, chastising their sin in love; but his mercy would never depart from them, and the kingdom would*

[1] Syria in the English Bible is Aram in Hebrew (cf. vv. 5, 6) and "Syriac" is "Aramaic" (cf. 2 K. 18 : 26 R. V. marg.). The English translation is misleading, as Syria, in the O. T., is not used in its modern sense, to cover the region bounded by Mount Taurus on the north, the Mediterranean on the west, and the desert on the east and south, but denotes a region which includes the northern part of Mesopotamia, and borders upon Palestine. (Cf. Gen. 31 : 44-52. Laban was an Aramean.) In Israel's history, Damascus usually, as here, plays the chief rôle among the Aramean States.

[2] This list is duplicated in 20 : 23-26, where the passage marks the end of David's reign.

be established forever. Then David offered to Jehovah a brief prayer of gratitude for his gracious promise for the days to come, as for the mighty redemption of days gone by, for his choice of Israel, and for the sure word that he would indeed bless and establish his house forever. "Be it indeed so," he prayed, "and great be the name of Israel's God forever."

Now that David's authority was established, he longed to show a kindness for Jonathan's sake[1] to any surviving member of the house of Saul, and after zealous inquiry, he found that Jonathan's son, the cripple Meribbaal, was still alive. With kingly generosity, he restored to him the whole of Saul's large estate, and gave him a place at his own table. David's fidelity to Jonathan's son (9)

Once more did David show his kingly heart, in that he sent a message of condolence to the bereaved King of Ammon, in grateful memory of his father's former kindness. But the ill-advised king insulted David's messengers, and provoked a war. The Ammonites summoned the Arameans to their aid; but by the strategy of Joab their combined forces were routed. War with Ammon. A king teaches a churl a lesson (10)

(b) *The Trail of David's Sin* (2 S. 11 to 1 K. 2)

On the anniversary of the insult, David sent Joab to besiege the Ammonite capital, but he himself stayed in Jerusalem. There he conceived a guilty passion for the fair Virtues of war and vices of peace (11 and 12)

[1] In accordance with his vow in 1 S. 20 : 15-17.

David's adultery and complicity in murder (11 : 1-27a)

Bathsheba, wife of one of his foreign soldiers. To conceal his sin, he summoned her husband from the siege, but twice this true warrior refused to yield to the temptation, set with so base a cunning. Not to be foiled, David sent him back to the siege with a letter charging Joab, under the semblance of doing him honor, to expose him to special peril. The cruel plan succeeded and Uriah fell. Then David, with a hypocritical comment on the chances of war, made Bathsheba his wife, and she bare him a son.

The prophet's rebuke (11 : 27b to 12 : 15a)

But the thing that David had done displeased his God, who made his voice heard through Nathan the prophet. Nathan's parable led the guilty king unwittingly to pronounce upon himself the word of doom. His conduct, said the prophet, had betrayed ungrateful contempt of Jehovah, and would be punished in kind—not secretly, as he had sinned, but before the eyes of all his people. Then the king confessed his sin, and the prophet declared that God had taken it away ; it must, however, work death, though not for him, yet for the child.

The penalty (12 : 15b-25)

Not all David's entreaty and penance could avert the judgment. When at last the child died, he arose, with brave resignation, to the surprise of his servants, and went to Jehovah's house and worshipped. In place of the lost child was born to Bathsheba another, even Solomon, the beloved of Jehovah.

The siege of the Ammonite capital proceeded amain.

At length it fell before David, and much spoil, including the crown of the god,[1] was taken. David set the inhabitants to forced labor,[2] and returned to Jerusalem. The defeat of Ammon (12 : 26-31)

Like father, like son. The tragedy of David's passion repeated itself in Ammon, who, aided by his cunning cousin, violated his half sister Tamar—a folly unworthy of an Israelite—and then sent her cruelly away. David, though exceedingly angry, was loth to grieve his first-born son[3] by harsh measures. Absalom, however, Tamar's full brother, nursed hopes of vengeance for two long years, and finally, at a sheep-shearing festival to which he had invited all the king's sons, had Ammon slain, to the intense grief of David; for thus he lost not only his first-born son, but also his darling Absalom, who fled to his royal grandfather,[4] whose kingdom lay to the northeast of Israel. Tamar's wrong avenged on Ammon by Absalom, who then fled (13)

Joab, seeing how the king's heart was toward Absalom, and interested in his return for reasons of his own, sent to the king a wise woman of Tekoa with a feigned tale of the risk of death to which her first-born son was exposed by the clan law of blood-revenge—a tale which moved the king to a solemn oath to save her son from the avengers. Why then—she went on with a compli- Absalom brought back and reconciled to the king (14)

[1] The Hebrew consonants for "Milcom," the god of the Ammonites, and "their king," are the same. The weight of the crown makes the former interpretation certain, supported as it is by the LXX.

[2] Or less probably "tortured them."

[3] So the LXX of v. 21. [4] Cf. 3 : 3.

ment to the king's discernment—why then will he not save his son by recalling him from banishment, as Ammon is dead and nothing can bring him back again? The shrewd king rightly suspected that Joab was behind the woman's word; and, turning to him, he gave him leave to bring Absalom back, which he gratefully did. But Absalom was not suffered to see the king's face for two whole years, when at last, by a bold stroke, he prevailed upon the reluctant Joab to intercede for him. The king then gave his son the kiss of reconciliation.

Absalom's intrigue and David's flight (15)

By the fitfulness of his dealing, however, David had forfeited the confidence of Absalom, who now began to scheme for the throne, winning the people by fair promises of better and speedier justice, if he were made king; and this went on for four[1] years, until finally he stole the hearts of the men of Israel. Then, on a religious pretext, he went to David's old capital, Hebron, and from there fomented a conspiracy throughout the whole country, securing for it the willing support of Ahithophel, a counsellor of David, Bathsheba's grandfather.[2] Surprised by the news, David hastened to leave Jerusalem, followed by a devoted band of servants; his foreign body-guard, who refused David's chivalrous suggestions to leave him, the weeping populace, and the priests. But, bowing before the will of God, he sent back these last with the ark to

[1] In v. 7, "four!" for "forty," by a very easy change.
[2] Cf. 11 : 3 and 23 : 34.

the city, where their services might be useful. It was a sad procession up Mount Olivet—king and people in tears. Hushai, who joined him, he entreated to go back to the city and confound the counsel of the treacherous Ahithophel.

Benjamite hatred of David (16 : 1-14)

This turn of affairs revived the slumbering hopes of Saul's clan, and Meribbaal's servant came to David with a plausible story that his master had cast off his allegiance to the king. Still more painfully obvious was the clan's hatred of David in the unchivalrous virulence of Shimei, which David would not avenge, but bore in resignation and hope ; for was it not the will of God ?

Absalom's formal claim to the throne (16 : 15-23)

Then Absalom and his supporters went to the capital, where he was joined by Hushai, who pretended to see in the new movement the hand of God. On the sage Ahithophel's counsel, Absalom took a step which indicated his assumption of the throne ; [1] and the break was now complete.

Ahithopel foiled : David crosses the Jordan (17)

Ahithophel now recommended immediate pursuit ; but, in accordance with David's desire, Hushai foiled his plan by a counterproposal which was adopted by the infatuated Absalom. Ahithophel, foreseeing the now inevitable failure of Absalom's cause, committed suicide. David and his forces, gaining time, crossed to the east of the Jordan, followed by his rebel son ; and there he received valuable

[1] Cf. 3 : 7 and 1 K. 2 : 22. Thus was the word of Nathan fulfilled (12 : 11, 12).

and touching tokens of loyalty from eastern chiefs, one of them an alien.

The battle: the death of Absalom (18)

David set his troops in array ; but they would not allow him to risk his own person. In the hard battle which followed, Absalom was routed and thousands fell. In spite of David's strict charge to the three commanders to deal gently with his child, Joab slew him in cold blood, and his death ended the battle. The news of victory was swiftly brought to the expectant David by a priest's son and a negro ; only the latter had the heart to speak of Absalom's doom, whereupon David burst out into uncontrollable grief.

David reinstated in popular favor (19 : 1-15)

For this he was brusquely rebuked by a few plain words from Joab. The reappearance of the king woke in the men of Israel the memory of his old services, and they urged his recall. But David would fain have his own clan of Judah take the first step ; so they came as one man to Gilgal to meet him, led by Amasa, Absalom's late commander, to whom David promised the command of Joab.

Tokens of loyalty (19 : 16-40)

David's success appearing to be now assured, Shimei with a large body of Saul's clan speedily tendered a cringing submission, which David magnanimously accepted on oath. Meribbaal, too, whose allegiance his servant had slanderously challenged, came to renew his assurance of loyalty. The hoary chief, Barzillai, who had aided him when his fortunes were low,[1] came, despite his great age,

[1] 17 : 27.

to conduct him, knightly-wise, over the Jordan; but he refused David's invitation to stay with him at the capital, preferring to die and be buried among his own people. With a parting kiss from the king, Barzillai returned home.

Strife between Israel and Judah (19 : 41 to 20 : 3)

Scarce was the struggle ended when strife again broke out between Judah and Israel. Israel, the larger people, which had spoken the first word of recall, was jealous of David's preference for Judah. So rebellion flamed forth again, and again it was headed by a man of Saul's tribe, who led Israel; but Judah clave to the king.

The rebellion crushed (20 : 4-22)

Seeing that no time must be lost, and chafing under the delay of Amasa, David started Abishai in pursuit of the rebels, in the course of which Joab, chancing upon his rival Amasa, treacherously slew him in cold blood. The pursuit was kept up as far as Abel in the extreme north, which was only saved from the horrors of a siege by the bold counsel of a wise woman, who urged that the head of the chief rebel be thrown over the wall; and with that the rebellion ended.[1]

[1] For the interesting and instructive interpolation, chs. 21 to 24, cf. p. 141. Besides the poems and lists it contains *Two Tales of Calamity:*

(1) *An Ancient Atonement* or *Saul's Sin avenged on his Sons* (21 : 1-14). Jehovah, who avenges all broken vows, had sent a famine upon the land, in chastisement—as the oracle said—for the sin of Saul in seeking to exterminate the friendly Gibeonites. To turn away Jehovah's wrath, David acceded to the demand of the Gibeonites that seven of Saul's sons should be hanged; for the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. Thus

A palace intrigue : the accession of Solomon (2 K. 1)

David was now old and weak, and Adonijah, the heir apparent,[1] supported by Joab and Abiathar, old and devoted servants of the king, the princes all but Solomon, and many of the people,[2] seized his opportunity at a sacred feast to lay his plans for the succession. This gave Nathan and Bathsheba the opening which they wanted to scheme for Solomon. With much skill they insinuated that Adonijah could not have gone so far without David's own consent, and that this consent was a violation of his

Jehovah was propitiated. Touched by the heroism of Rizpah's love, David united the family in death by burying together the bones of father and sons in the family grave.

(2) *Pride and Penitence* or *David's Census and its Results* (24). Once more Jehovah was angry; for David, in his pride, had had a census taken of his people. The proposal had offended even the feeling of Joab, and David must be made to learn that all power is of God. No sooner was the census over than the pestilence fell. Then David's heart smote him; he saw (as in 21 : 1, where the famine led him to feel that there was wrong somewhere) and confessed his sin, praying that it might fall upon himself and not upon his innocent people. So the pestilence was stayed, ere it touched Jerusalem; and on the alien ground, where Jehovah's grace had been manifested, David raised an altar, and offered a sacrifice of thanksgiving—a sacrifice which cost. (This difficult chapter needs some rearrangement; v. 17, e.g., is clearly out of place. Possibly, too, 10-14 is a later section.)

Between these narratives stand the psalms (1), a triumphant song of gratitude for all God's gracious deliverances (ch. 22=Ps. 18). (2) A last song whose theme is that "the throne which by the grace of God, he had held with justice, would endure for ever, while the wicked would perish" (23 : 1-7). This psalm is followed by a list: Thirty mighty men had David, three exceeding brave, who risked their lives for the king they loved, though he nobly refused a gift that cost so dear and offered it to God (23 : 8-39).

[1] Cf. 2 S. 3 : 4. Chileab appears to have died. [2] 2 : 15.

solemn promise to Bathsheba,[1] that Solomon would be his successor. Indignant at Adonijah's seeming intrigue, David, with a solemn oath, took steps that very day to have Solomon proclaimed king amid the acclamations of the people, to the great satisfaction of Zadok and Benaiah, the rivals of Abiathar and Joab, and of the foreign body-guard. The sounds of jubilation startled Adonijah and his guests; still more, the news that Solomon was king, and the company dispersed. Adonijah fled for his life to the protection of the altar. Solomon released him with an ambiguous promise and banished him from the court.

David's last charge (2 : 1-12)

As David's end drew near, he charged Solomon *to keep the commandments of Jehovah as written in the law of Moses, for on that his throne depended:* and further to take vengeance on Joab for the blood of Abner and Amasa, to show kindness to the children of Barzillai who came to his aid in dark days, and to take vengeance on Shimei, who in those same days had cursed him.[2] David

1 A promise unrecorded, if indeed ever given.

2 Many critics regard this whole section as unhistorical, and due to the Deuteronomic redactor, whose design, it is argued, was to remove the odium of these murders from Solomon, the builder of the temple. But considering the reverence of later ages for David, this would have been a dear price to pay for the reputation of Solomon. The reference to Barzillai is almost too natural to be invented; Solomon had no known motive of his own for removing Shimei; and vengeance on Joab may well have been with David a matter of conscience, as Abner had been David's guest, and Amasa was his nephew, being the son of Abigail, David's sister (2 S. 17 : 25 and 19 : 13). (Kittel.)

died after a reign of forty years, *and the kingdom of Solomon his son and successor was strongly established.*

Solomon removes his enemies.

(a) Adonijah (2 : 13-25)

Soon all obstacles were removed from Solomon's way; and first Adonijah, who had unwisely asked for the hand of Abishag, a concubine of Solomon's by right of succession. Unwisely: for such a petition seemed a bid for the throne. With this pretext Solomon had him put to death.

(b) Abiathar and (c) Joab (2 : 26-35)

Next to suffer were Adonijah's chief supporters: the priest Abiathar who was deposed, *thus fulfilling the word touching the house of Eli;*[1] and then Joab, who, terrified by the fate of Adonijah and his supporters, fled for his life to the protection of the altar, and there, despite its sanctity, atoned, by a ruthless death, for the innocent blood that he had shed, and so released the royal house from bloodguiltiness. Then Joab and Abiathar were replaced by their rivals.

(d) Shimei (2 : 36-45)

Solomon also took advantage of a broken vow of Shimei to put him to death for his enmity to David. All the obstacles being thus removed, the kingdom was established in the hands of Solomon.

[1] 1 S. 2 : 31-36.

IX

THE SOURCES AND CHARACTER OF THE BOOKS OF KINGS

We have already seen how powerfully the Deuteronomic redaction controlled the presentation of the history in the Books of Kings.[1] Besides contributing the general conception of the history, which is implicit in the criticisms of the various kings, it also determines the formula which opens and closes the story of each reign. Typical of the treatment of the kings of Judah is 2 Kings 15 : 1, 2 : *In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign. Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign ; and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem ; and his mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem ;* with the conclusion (vv. 6, 7) : *Now the rest of the acts of Azariah and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Azariah slept with his fathers ; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David : and Jonathan his son reigned in his stead.*[2] Typical of the treatment of the kings of Israel is 1 Kings 16 : 29 : *In the thirty and eighth year*

[1] Cf. pp. 95-97.

[2] These formulæ, as they are of regular occurrence, are omitted in the paraphrase.

of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years, with a conclusion similar to that above, only containing more historical fact or suggestion (22 : 39, 40). It is not without interest and significance that there is usually more elaboration in connection with the formulæ for the kings of Judah than Israel, the mother's name, for example, being added.

The sources. What are the sources on which the redactor set to work? Three are expressly mentioned: the book of the acts of Solomon (1 K. 11 : 41), the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel, and the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. The nature of the book of the acts of Solomon, which we are capable of inferring from the contents of the section 1 Kings 3 to 11, makes it improbable that these other books were annals: more likely they were themselves finished histories. Doubtless, however, they rest in many cases upon original documents; the lists of officials suggest as much: and though, considering the revolutionary nature of the history of the northern kingdom, anything like continuity in court annals is extremely improbable, there must have been, for some periods at least, official documents which might well form the basis of later historical work.

Prophetic biographies. But to be more explicit. After deducting from the books all the notices that may have been taken from such documents, together with the redactional elements, there are,

besides the long section on Solomon, narratives varying in length, which look as if they might be fragments of biography, for example, the story of Jeroboam I. or Jehu, though in most of these fragments, and particularly in the longer of them, the interest is chiefly centred on prophets. Such is the section dealing with Hezekiah (2 K. 18 to 20) in which the prophet Isaiah gathers about him more interest than the king; and especially such is the long and not quite uninterrupted section (1 K. 17 to 2 K. 8) which glorifies the deeds of Elijah and Elisha. Kings appear in those sections, but largely as a foil to the grandeur of the prophets. The nature of these sections leads to the belief that there were lives of the prophets, written doubtless by members of the prophetic guilds, at the disposal of the editors of our book of kings, or even of the writers of the history that lies behind it.

Was there a temple history?

From the numerous references to the temple and the copious detail with which certain temple incidents are discussed, it has been inferred that there was also a temple history. The inference, however, is precarious. Such a statement as that laymen were more faithful with the temple money than the priests,[1] hardly looks as if it was taken from such a source. Nor is it probable that the story of the creation of Ahaz's new altar on the model of the altar which he had seen at Damascus, would have been recorded in such a source without protest.

[1] 2 K. 12 : 1-16.

The compositeness of the story of Solomon.

Even the story of Solomon which, as we have seen, constituted a section by itself and probably contains some original documents, is not all of a piece and contains elements of varying historical value. Side by side with stories—which may well be old—like that of Solomon's famous decision in the dispute between the two women, are others of a more romantic sort, which on the face of them must be much later than the times of which they tell. "There came no more," we are told, "such abundance of spices as these which the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon."[1] Clearly the age of Solomon lies in the not very recent past. It is looked at with generous eyes, eyes which grow more generous as the age recedes. For "silver," it is said, "was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon;"[2] although that statement, with the statement of his enormous revenue,[3] is not easy to reconcile with his loan from Hiram.[4] The later tendency to glorify the monarch is seen, too, in the contrast between the early statement in 5:13 that he "raised a levy out of all Israel," with the later statement that the levy was raised from the older inhabitants of the land, and not from the children of Israel (9:20-22), though the earlier statement, in itself so probable, is corroborated by Rehoboam's own admission of the severity of his father's policy (12:11, cf. 4) and by the valuable hint in 11:28 that Jeroboam was in charge of the work done by the house of Joseph—an office

[1] 10:10. [2] 10:21. [3] 10:14. [4] 9:14.

which gave him his opportunity to strike out for himself. Enough has been said to suggest that even the original sources from which our present book drew, were themselves already composite.

Repetitions, duplicates, and contradictions.

That being so, the presence of repetitions, duplicates, and contradictions need not surprise us. Some of these phenomena are due, of course, to the elements contributed by the redactors, and to still later additions. We are twice told that Rehoboam's mother was Naamah,[1] twice that there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam,[2] and between Asa and Baasha all their days,[3] and twice of the composition of Jeroboam's priesthood.[4] Again, while the older source frankly speaks of the war between Jeroboam and Rehoboam,[5] the later version so far idealizes the situation as to represent Judah as withdrawing without a battle, at the instance of the prophetic word.[6] In 2 Kings 17, the annexing of the third attempt to philosophize on the fall of Samaria, to account for the rise and progress of the Samaritan cult, has led to serious confusion, and to apparent, though only apparent, contradictions.[7] The most famous duplicate occurs in the story of the peril of Jerusalem from the Assyrians in the time of Hezekiah, where 18: 13 to 19: 8 is a parallel to 19: 9-37, even the latter

[1] 1 K. 14: 21, 31. [2] 14: 30 and 15: 6. [3] 15: 16, 32.
[4] 12: 31 and 13: 33. [5] 14: 30. [6] 12: 21-24.
[7] In v. 33 *they*, i.e., *the colonists*, feared Jehovah. In 34[b] *they*, i.e., *Israel* (= Samaria), fear not Jehovah.

version itself, however, being clearly composite.[1] Two versions also underlie the story of the revolution inaugurated by Jehoiada (2 K. 11), one of a secular, the other of a more religious, nature.

The later elements are the less historical.

The earliest Hebrew historians, the Jehovist, and the Elohist, cared more, as we have seen, for idea than fact. This tendency grew, and was exaggerated in later times into a positive indifference to fact. The more romantic or improbable a narrative may seem, the more should we feel sure that the narrator is not appearing before us in the rôle of historian, but is amplifying and adapting a tale, which very likely has some historical kernel, to express some great idea. We have not disposed of his story fairly until we have grasped the idea which that story is a strange effort to embody. Outside of the Book of Chronicles, the classic illustration of that attitude is 1 Kings 13. The theme was an attractive one—indeed in one sense it is *the* theme of the Deuteronomist—the sin and doom of Jeroboam. To one who looks for history, the chapter presents a fair accumulation of surprises. There is an unparalleled instance of predictive prophecy—Josiah is foretold by name three centuries before he appears (v. 2); the details are remarkably definite (v. 2) and are fulfilled to the letter (2 K. 23: 20); the sign is a strange one (v. 3), only less strange than the immediate withering of the rebellious hand, and its immediate restoration on the prophet's prayer

[1] These two passages are referred by some to different campaigns.

(v. 4); the morality of the "old prophet," whose revelation is attributed to an angel, is more than questionable; the picture of the lion, the ass, and the dead prophet is, to say the least, improbable. It is not without significance that the man of God, whose message and doom are thus strangely told, is anonymous. But what makes it absolutely certain, if these considerations were not enough, that the chapter is late—it is probably very late—is the anachronism of 13:32, where the "cities of *Samaria*" are explicitly mentioned, though Samaria itself is said not to have been built until at least half a century after (16 : 24); and further, such a reference to the cities of Samaria implies that Samaria is a province, as it was not till after the exile. Historically this chapter can have little worth. Nevertheless it is the partly harsh, partly romantic embodiment of great ideas, such as that God's word is immutable and that his commands must be uncompromisingly obeyed.

A very similar spirit has been at work on chapter 20 of the same book where there is another anonymous prophet (v. 35), and another lion scene (v. 36). With these facts go numbers suspiciously high; for example, 100,000 Arameans are slain (v. 29), very unlike Israel's army of 7,000 in the older story (v. 15); and what kind of wall could it be that fell upon 27,000 men (v. 30)? But the moral of the story is not unlike the last, that disobedience to the word of God means death. That is the truth that gleams through the harsh and improbable setting.

The religious significance of the book.

The thoroughness of the redaction has deprived the book —with the exception of the Elijah and Elisha sections which were but little affected by it—of that quaint picturesqueness which is one of the many charms of the Hexateuchal narrative. Still there are scenes of great religious interest and power—notably perhaps that of the council of the host of heaven sitting round about Jehovah on his right hand and on his left.[1] The history covered by the books is a large contribution to the divine purpose, that purpose which works itself out, though a king disguise himself on the battle-field to escape it,[2] and though another king "shed innocent blood very much."[3] From the human standpoint, the history of the monarchy had been an almost unbroken tragedy; from the brilliant promise of David's reign to that dark day—followed by days darker still—when Israel's hopes lay shattered on the field of Megiddo. First the northern kingdom, then the southern, plunged through disobedience into exile and sorrow—one never to emerge again. But the work of the other was not yet done. In the purpose of God she had yet much to learn and much to teach. Out of the exile he delivered the people to fulfil their destiny, as once he had delivered the holy city itself from Assyrian menace and assault. Thus in a very deep sense were fulfilled the brave words of Isaiah: "The remnant that is escaped out of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. For

[1] 1 K. 22 : 19-23. [2] 1 K. 22 : 30, 34. [3] 2 K. 21 : 16.

out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and out of mount Zion they that shall escape: the zeal of Jehovah shall perform this."[1]

X

THE REIGN OF SOLOMON (1 K. 3 to 11)

1. *His Wisdom and his Kingdom* (3 and 4)

Solomon's dream (3 : 2-15)

Solomon loved Jehovah; only he worshipped him upon the high places, as the temple at Jerusalem was not yet built.[2] On one of those places of worship, named Gibeon, Solomon was visited by Jehovah in a dream; and on the threshold of his royal duties, he humbly besought him—not indeed for riches or long life or victory—but for wisdom and insight touching all matters which fell to him to judge. Jehovah heard and answered his wise prayer, and gave him, besides riches and honor, length of days for which he had not asked. *Then he offered sacrifice in Jerusalem.*

His judicial wisdom (3 : 16-28)

That Solomon won from Jehovah the wisdom for which he prayed was manifest to all in the skill with which he decided the case of the two women who contended for the living child.

Solomon's kingdom was highly organized. Each de-

[1] 2 K. 19 : 30, 31.

[2] The standard and small italics represent the earlier and later redactions respectively. Cf. pp. 96, 97.

Organization of his kingdom (4 : 1-28)

partment had its own presiding officer, the priest coming immediately after the king. The country was divided into twelve districts—not the old tribal districts—over each of which an officer was appointed, charged with the duty of catering during one month each year for the king's luxurious table. *The kingdom was populous and prosperous, extending from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates.*

His wisdom, proverbs, and songs (4 : 29-34)

Solomon's wisdom exceeded that of the astrologers and magicians of the east, and won him universal renown. He was also the author of numerous songs and proverbs, that made mention of all sorts of plants and animals.

2. *Solomon's Buildings* (1 K. 5 to 9)

Preparations for building (5 and 9 : 11-14)

Hiram, king of Tyre, who had been friendly to David, sent his congratulations to the new king of Israel, and Solomon seized this opportunity to make arrangements with him for the preparation of the temple which he contemplated building *in accordance with the word of Jehovah to his father;* for there were great timber forests in Lebanon, and Hiram's subjects had exceptional skill in working wood. In return, Solomon furnished Hiram with compensation for their services, and a treaty was concluded. For a subsequent grant of money, Solomon ceded Hiram twenty cities in Galilee. To prosecute the work, Solomon raised from among his people an *enormous* levy which worked one month and rested two.

The laying of the foundation of the temple in the fourth

year of Solomon's reign—it took seven years to build—*marked a new epoch in the history of Israel.* Foundation of the temple (6 : 1, 37, 38)

The temple had a porch in front and three stories of rooms built round about the wall on three sides. Within the temple, at the back, was the oracle, or holy of holies, whose walls were overlaid with gold—half the length of the temple proper, and separated from it by a wall. In front of the oracle was the cedar altar, overlaid with gold, on which stood the shew bread; and within, two cherubs, overlaid with gold, with outstretched wings, to guard the sanctuary. There, too, was the ark of *the covenant of* Jehovah. The door of the oracle and the posts of the temple door were richly carved and overlaid with gold; and a wall ran round the inner court. Description of the temple (6 : 2-36)

The vessels of the temple were skilfully designed by the son of a famous Tyrian artist in metal. Among them were the two bronze pillars with ornamented capitals—symbols of Jehovah's might—that stood near by the entrance to the temple porch[1]; further a sea of bronze supported by twelve bronze oxen; ten lavers of brass resting on bases ornamented with figures of animals and running on wheels; also pots, and shovels, and basins all of bronze. Divers gold utensils also there were, the altar (of incense) and many others; and Solomon put the gifts that David had dedicated among the treasures of the temple. The temple vessels (7 : 13-51)

[1] The indispensable notice of the bronze altar must once have stood here (between vv. 22 and 23). Cf. 2 Chr. 4 : 1. It is presupposed in 8 : 22, 64 and 9 : 25.

The ark brought to the temple (8 : 1-11)

Then Solomon, accompanied by the chiefs of the people, brought up the ark, *which contained nothing but the two tables of stone*, from Zion to the temple, and with the sacrifice of *numberless* cattle, the priests set it in the oracle. Straightway the place was filled with the cloud of Jehovah's glory.[1]

Words of dedication (8 : 12, 13)

Then with these words—preserved in the Book of the Brave[2]—Solomon dedicated the temple:

The sun hath Jehovah set in the heavens,
He himself hath determined to dwell in the darkness.
And so I have built thee an house to dwell in,
Even a place to abide in for ever and ever.

The prayer of dedication (8 : 14-53)

The people stood to receive Solomon's blessing, *and he offered the prayer of dedication.* "*Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, who hath chosen Jerusalem for his habitation, and hath fulfilled this day his promise to David that his son would build him an house.*"[3] *May the faithful Jehovah further fulfil his promise by continuing for evermore the dynasty of David!*

Hearken, O thou that dwellest in heaven, unto the prayers that thy servant and thy people may direct towards this place; and when thou hearest, forgive.

When a curse is pronounced upon the transgressor; when the people are smitten in battle for their sins; when for their sin the thirsty land withereth; when any evil

[1] Cf. Ex. 33 : 9 (E).

[2] By a very probable emendation, based upon the LXX. [3] 2 S. 7.

of whatsoever kind befall: hear thou in heaven when they cry in penitence to thee—they, or the strangers, who, won by the story of thy might, will come to worship thee, the God of the whole earth—and when thou hearest, forgive. Should thy people be carried into exile, and there they with confession turn unto thee with all their heart, and pray toward this city and house of thine, graciously grant that their enemies take pity upon them; for they are thine own people, the people of thine ancient choice.

Then Solomon blessed the people, entreating the God who had faithfully kept his ancient promise, to be with them as he had been with the fathers, inclining their hearts to walk in his ways, and maintaining their cause, that all the world might know that Israel's God is the only God. The royal blessing (8 : 54-61)

After this prayer, he offered a sacrifice to Jehovah; and so many were the animals that they had to be offered in the middle of the temple court, which was specially consecrated thereto. Then all the people *throughout the length of the land* celebrated the harvest festival for seven days, and on the eighth the king sent the people to their homes *with hearts touched to gladness by their God's goodness to them and to the throne.* The conclusion of the dedication ceremony (8 : 62-66)

When all was finished, Jehovah again appeared to Solomon, pledging himself to maintain both temple and dynasty for ever. But should the people, in forgetfulness of his ancient grace, turn from him to the worship of other gods, he would make them a byword, and the temple a heap of ruins. The shadow of destruction (9 : 1-9)

The palace (7 : 1-12)

The royal palace, which took thirteen years to build, was constructed as follows : First there was the house of the forest of Lebanon, so called from the three rows of cedar pillars, fifteen in a row, with chambers built above. Next to it came a porch of pillars (where petitioners might wait for audience), and next to that the porch of the throne where the king pronounced judgment. Then came the palace proper with an adjoining palace for Pharaoh's daughter—all built of large finely hewn stone, and a wall ran round the palace court.

Fortifications and trade (9 : 10, 15, 18-28)

Solomon fortified Jerusalem and other strategic points over the country by impressing foreign labor, and with the assistance of Hiram and his Tyrian sailors he built a navy which carried on a rich trade with distant lands.

Three times a year did Solomon offer sacrifice (9 : 25).

Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter (3 : 1 and 9 : 16, 17)

He married an Egyptian princess, who received as her dowry the Canaanite city of Gezer which had been seized by her father.

3. *Solomon's Glory and Decline* (1 K. 10 and 11)

Visit of the queen of Sheba (10 : 1-13)

Solomon's wealth and wisdom are strikingly illustrated by the impression they made on the Arabian queen, whom the king's fame attracted all the way from her distant home. Besides the costly presents of the queen, lavishly reciprocated by Solomon, *other precious products were brought to the country by Solomon's fleet.*

He had an *enormous* revenue in gold, not to speak of

taxes and tribute. Shields of gold, too, he had, and a gorgeous ivory throne, and vessels *all* of gold, brought from afar by his ships. *He exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom, and far-off peoples brought him presents.*[1] With northern Syria[2] he had also a great trade in war-horses. Solomon's riches (10 : 14-29)

He had foreign wives *exceeding* many, *who turned away his heart to the worship of their gods. The rejected Jehovah therefore determined to rend his kingdom, and leave him with but one tribe.* Solomon's wives (11 : 1-13)

The punishment fell in the shape of revolt against his authority. First Edom,[3] which had been won by David, asserted her independence. Damascus also revolted under the energetic freebooter Rezon. Revolt of Edom and Aram (11 : 14-25)

Finally, Jeroboam, whom Solomon had appointed overseer of the forced labor of the house of Joseph in connection with the fortification of the capital, seized the occasion, instigated by a prophet, to fortify his own city,[4] and revolt against the king. To escape the royal vengeance, he fled to Egypt, where he remained till the death of the king, *who died after a reign of forty years and was succeeded by his son Rehoboam.* Rebellion of Jeroboam; death of Solomon (11 : 26-28, 40-43)

[1] Suggesting thoughts of the Messianic king.
[2] This seems more probable than the translation "Egypt."
[3] Perhaps supported by her neighbor Midian (cf. v. 18).
[4] So some MSS. of the LXX.

XI

HISTORY OF THE MONARCHY TO THE FALL OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM (1 K. 12 to 2 K. 17)

1. *Jeroboam I. King of Israel* (1 K. 12:1 to 14:20), 937-915 B. C.

Jeroboam's return (12: 1, 2; 11: 29-39)

Then Jeroboam returned from Egypt in the hope of seizing the crown. On the way to Shechem, whither he had summoned all the people, a prophet met him[1] and announced that *for the apostasy of the people, Solomon's kingdom would be rent, and that far the larger share would fall to Jeroboam himself—all but one tribe with the chosen city Jerusalem, which would still be governed by the dynasty of David, because of Jehovah's love for him. To Jeroboam, too, was given the promise of a house as sure as David's, if he but obeyed Jehovah.*

Division of the kingdom. Jeroboam king of Israel (12: 3-25)

The people would pledge their allegiance to Rehoboam, only on condition that he would treat them better than his father had done. Adopting, however, the foolish counsel of his youthful courtiers, he replied with deliberate insolence which, *by the ordinance of God*, provoked Israel to rebellion against the house of David, and Jeroboam was proclaimed king of Israel. In the struggle that followed,

[1] Several considerations, derived from the LXX texts, suggest that this is the best arrangement, as it has also high historical probability.

Judah and Benjamin yielded to the word of Jehovah and withdrew.[1] Jeroboam, now master of the northern kingdom, fortified Shechem in the heart of the country and Penuel across the Jordan.

Jeroboam's calf-worship (12 : 26-32)

Fearing that the splendor of the temple at Jerusalem might revive in the hearts of the people their allegiance to the Davidic dynasty, Jeroboam set up two golden calves, symbols of Jehovah, in Bethel and Dan, and sacrificed to them. *Thus did he make Israel to sin.* He also established worship on the high places, and appointed priests *who were not Levites.*

Its doom pronounced by a prophet (12 : 33 to 13 : 34)

At the harvest festival in the royal sanctuary at Bethel a man of God out of Judah foretold to Jeroboam as he was about to sacrifice on the iniquitous altar, that a day of vengeance was coming.[2] A child named Josiah would be born who would sacrifice upon the altar the idolatrous priests. In proof whereof the prophet offered a marvellous sign, which came to pass. Now Jehovah had charged the man of God to return by another way to Judah, neither eating nor drinking on the soil of the northern kingdom. But an old prophet tempted him with a lie, and he yielded. Then the prophet was inspired to proclaim the doom of his disobedience—for the divine word is unchangeable—and in a most wondrous way the doom was fulfilled. Likewise was the prophet's word of doom, pronounced upon the altar of Bethel, destined to be unchangeable, and in the doom of Bethel was involved Jeroboam and his house.

[1] 21-24 is post-exilic. Benjamin here acts with Judah—which contradicts the older source in v. 20. The whole section contradicts the express statement in 14 : 30.

[2] For this chapter, see pp. 182, 183.

Doom of Jeroboam's house and of the northern kingdom (14 : 1-20)

Now Jeroboam's son fell sick; and he sent his wife in disguise with a present to consult the prophet. Heavy —said the prophet, recognizing her, for he had been divinely forewarned—heavy were the tidings he had for her. *The idolatrous apostasy of her husband Jeroboam would not go unpunished. Evil would come upon his house, and every man of it would be ignominiously cut off by a king yet to come, all* but her innocent child, who would soon die and be buried in peace. *The people would be swept away into exile for the idolatry into which Jeroboam had led them.* And the child died, as the prophet had said.[1]

2. *Rehoboam, King of Judah* (1 K. 14 : 21-31), 937-920 B. C.

Rehoboam, king of Judah (14 : 21-31)

Rehoboam reigned over Judah in Jerusalem, *the chosen city of Jehovah.* Judah, too, *provoked Jehovah in that* the people practised all sorts of *heathenish* worship, even the most immoral. During his reign, the king of Egypt invaded Jerusalem, and carried away all the temple and palace treasures, together with the royal shields.

[1] One very important LXX text (B) sets this story after Jeroboam's return from Egypt, but before he becomes king. The denunciation of the LXX text is much briefer than the Hebrew, lacking—significantly enough—the Deuteronomic comment on Jeroboam and the fate of Israel.

3. *Abijah, King of Judah* (1 K. 15 : 1-8), 920-917 B. C.

Rehoboam was succeeded by his son, Abijah,[1] *who, unlike David the good, followed in his father's evil ways; nevertheless, for David's sake,*[2] *the dynasty was not destroyed.* Abijah, king of Judah (15 : 1-8)

4. *Asa, King of Judah* (1 K. 15 : 9-24), 917-876 B. C.

Abijah was succeeded by his son Asa, who was a good king. For he abolished the immoral worship of Jehovah, and deposed the queen mother for her idolatry, *but he did not remove the high places.* Throughout his whole reign, Israel and Judah were at war. Baasha, king of Israel, began to fortify Ramah, in order to hold Jerusalem in check. In alarm, Asa, by means of the temple treasures, bought the friendship of Ben-hadad of Damascus, who was in league with Baasha, and Ben-hadad drew off Baasha by attacking northern Israel. Then Asa engaged all his people in the dismantling of Ramah, and the fortifying of two border towns. Asa, king of Judah: his war with Israel (15 : 9-24)

5. *Nadab, King of Israel* (1 K. 15 : 25-32), 915-913 B. C.

In Israel, Jeroboam was succeeded by his son Nadab, *who walked in his father's evil way.* In a military rev- Nadab, king of Israel (15 : 25-32)

[1] So in LXX and 2 Chr. 13 : 1. The change to Abijam might be either accidental or intentional, to avoid the association of the divine name (Jah) with such a king.

[2] 11 : 36.

olution, he and all his house were murdered by Baasha, *and thus the prophetic word was fulfilled.*[1]

6. *Baasha, King of Israel* (1 K. 15 : 33 to 16 : 7), 913-889 B. C.

Baasha, king of Israel (15 : 33 to 16 : 7)

But Baasha, too, *walked in the evil way of Jeroboam ; and as his sin was like Jeroboam's, so, too, was destined to be his doom—so a prophet announced.*

7. *Elah, King of Israel* (1 K. 16 : 8-14), 889-887 B. C.

Elah, king of Israel (16 : 8-14)

Nor was the doom long in coming ; for in another revolution, Baasha's son and successor Elah, with all his house, was murdered by Zimri, a captain in the army, *and thus the prophetic word was fulfilled.*

8. *Zimri, King of Israel* (1 K. 16 : 15-20), 887 B. C.

Zimri, king of Israel (16 : 15-20)

On this news, Omri, the commander-in-chief, was proclaimed king by the army, which then besieged the royal capital, Tirzah. Whereupon Zimri, who had reigned but seven days, burnt the palace over his own head, and so met his death, *because he had walked in the way of Jeroboam.*

9. *Omri, King of Israel* (1 K. 16 : 21-28), 887-875 B. C.

Omri, king of Israel (16 : 21-28)

At first, Omri's authority was disputed, but the death of his rival, and his rival's brother,[2] left him unchallenged.

[1] 14 : 10.

[2] "Tibni died and Joram his brother at that time." So **LXX.**

The finely situated Samaria he fortified and made his capital. *But he, too, even more than his predecessors, walked in the way of Jeroboam.*

10. *Ahab, King of Israel* (1 K. 16 : 29 to 22 : 40), 875-853 B. C.

Ahab and Baal worship (16 : 29-34)

Still worse was his son and successor Ahab; *for* he married Jezebel, the daughter of the Phœnician king, and adopted thereby the worship of the Phœnician Baal, *thus provoking Jehovah to anger.* The curse invoked by Joshua on the man who would fortify Jericho, fell upon Achiel.[1]

[1] Josh. 6 : 26. Achiel is his name in the LXX. "Fortify" rather than "build," as the city of Jericho is more than once mentioned as existing in the period between Joshua and Ahab. Cf. Jud. 3 : 13, 2 S. 10 : 5.

11. *The Stories Regarding Elijah and Elisha.*

Chapter 17 of the first Book of Kings ushers us into a new world. From kings we pass to prophets, and the formal notices of chapter 16 yield at once to a narrative of exceptionally graphic interest and power, which the hand of the redactor has scarcely touched. The existence of an altar of Jehovah on Carmel,[1] of many altars throughout the land,[2] and the advice given by Elisha [3] in express contradiction of Deuteronomy,[4] show that this group of narratives, which was written in the northern kingdom,[5] precedes Deuteronomy. The only important redactional touch is in 1 Kings 18 : 31, 32,[6] where the repairing of an old altar is represented as the erection of a new and special one, typical of the unity of Israel.

A comparison of the Elijah group with chapters 20 and 22 : 1-38, as well as the general impression made by the narrative, suggest that the figure of Elijah has been somewhat idealized. There the prophet is Micah, the son of Imlah; Elijah is not even mentioned, though Jehoshaphat twice asks if there is a prophet of Jehovah.[6] Ahab appears there, too, in a more favorable light. The tendency to idealize is still more clearly seen in the later figure Elisha. His miracles are more numerous and more

[1] 1 K. 18 : 30. [2] 19 : 10. [3] 2 K. 3 : 19. [4] 20 : 19.
[5] Cf. 1 K. 19 : 3 Beersheba, *which belongeth to Judah.*
[6] 1 K. 22 : 7 and 2 K. 3 : 11.

strange.[1] His dignity must be recognized.[2] He is all but inaccessible.[3] Repeatedly obeisance is done him.[4] He has even a sort of omniscience.[5] Yet withal he is not nearly so impressive a figure as Elijah; contrast his words before Joram[6] with those of Elijah before Ahab.[7] His miracles are in great part but shadows of Elijah's. We clearly do not possess the stories in their original entirety. The Elisha group is more loosely connected than the Elijah group, and even in the latter there are obvious omissions. There must have originally been something, for example, to explain the scene of the first episode,[8] and above all to justify the doom pronounced on Ahab,[9] though the sequel makes it clear that it was the penalty for Baal worship.[10]

Elijah is one of the Titans of literature, as he is of religion. His appearances and disappearances are swift as lightning; his words are words of thunder. Splendidly dramatic are the scenes where Elijah and Ahab meet—the champion of single-heartedness and the champion of compromise. The grim and fearless[11] man with his terrible

[1] Cf. especially ∎ K. 13 : 20, 21. [2] 2 K. 5 : 8. [3] 4 : 11-15.
[4] 2 : 15 and 4 : 15, 37. [5] 5 : 26. [6] 3 : 14.
[7] 1 K. 17 : 1. ∎ Cf. 17 : 3 (hence).
[9] 17 : 1. It is implied, no doubt in 16 : 31-33; but that is not part of the Elijah group of stories, nor do the words of the doom allude to that.
[10] For the rain comes when the Baal prophets are slain, 18 : 40, 41.
[11] He is afraid once. (1 K. 19 : 3. R. V. margin.) The Hebrew consonants for "he was afraid," which is the reading of the LXX, were pointed by the Massoretes to mean "he saw."

word, strong in the might of Jehovah his God, as his name implies, can face a king who hates him and has outlawed him, crowds that are hostile to him, and can even mock the god who is being worshipped with a passion of frenzy, when failure to made good his taunts meant all but certain death. He came at a time when Israel's religion was imperilled from the side of the cruel and licentious religion of Phœnicia, through the marriage of Israel's king with the princess of Tyre; and he carried that religion triumphantly over a crisis which, but for him, under God, might have spelt ruin for all that Israel was meant to stand for in the world. Then, too, as always, idolatry meant immorality. Elijah's denunciation of the covetous Ahab for the murder of Naboth is as significant if not as epoch-making in the history of religion, as was his ironical assault on the Baal. The religion which he championed was instinct with morality. When we look at the stern man, and at his noble and abiding work, we cannot wonder that partly by his personality and partly by his unique place among the prophets, he dominated the Hebrew imagination for centuries. In dark days, when hearts were breaking, and good men had begun to despair of the justice and the love of God, and there was no more any great prophet in the land, it was to the coming again of this mighty one that they looked to reunite the families whom sin and ambition had divided.[1] And when at last

[1] Mal. 4 : 5, 6.

the great Prophet appeared who should come into the world, the honest and untutored instinct of the common people recognized in him the majesty and power of Elijah.[1]

12. *Tales of Elijah* (1 K. 17 to 2 K. 1)

Elijah proclaims drought (17 : 1)

Suddenly Elijah of Gilead appears before Ahab and announces a coming drought and famine, in chastisement for the Baal worship. As swiftly he disappears.

Elijah at the Cherith (17 : 2-6)

Now an outlaw, he is swept by the divine impulse within him to the torrent Cherith, and there he is miraculously sustained by ravens until the torrent dried.

At Zarephath (17 : 7-24)

Then the same impulse swept him to Zarephath in Phœnicia, the land of the Baal worshippers, one of whom, a poor widow woman, in simple obedience to his word, was miraculously enabled to sustain herself, her son, and him in the sore famine. Again her son, who had fallen sick and died,[2] was miraculously raised from the dead in answer to the prophet's prayer. Thus the woman learned that the God of Israel is a God whose word, spoken through his prophet, is sure.

Elijah appears again before Ahab (18 : 1-20)

In the third year of the drought Elijah was divinely impelled to appear before Ahab with the promise of rain. On the way, he suddenly confronted Obadiah, a devout officer in Ahab's household; but, so strangely was Elijah

[1] Mt. 16 : 14.

[2] This is not said in so many words. Indeed, v. 17 almost appears to avoid saying so. But the whole story, especially vv. 21, 22, implies it.

wont to vanish—swept away by the spirit of Jehovah[1]—that Obadiah, fearing for his own life, was loath at first to announce his presence to Ahab. But that very day, Elijah fearlessly faced the angry king, denounced his support of the Baal worship, and proposed to put the power of the contending gods, Jehovah and Baal, to a searching test. Ahab accepted the challenge.

The triumph of Jehovah over Baal on Carmel (18 . 21-40)

Baal, however, could do nothing, not even when long and wildly supplicated by his prophets, nor yet when stung by the reproachful irony of Elijah. Then, in answer to the lonely prophet's solemn prayer to Israel's God, fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice. Thus Jehovah triumphed over Baal, and his triumph was acknowledged by the prostrate people in the twice repeated words: "Jehovah is the God." By the command of the stern Elijah, the Baal prophets were slain.

The rain falls (18 : 41-46)

The penalty had now been paid, and instantly was heard the tremulous prophecy of rain. Elijah bade Ahab depart with all haste, lest it should overtake him. Speedily the sky grew black. The rain fell in torrents; and in wild ecstatic mood, Elijah ran before the royal chariot across the plain of Jezreel.

Elijah's faith is quickened at Horeb (19 : 1-18)

Threatened by Jezebel with instant vengeance for the slaughter of the prophets of Baal, Elijah fled beyond the confines of Israel to the southernmost sanctuary of Judah, whence, weary of his life, yet strengthened by an angel,

[1] Cf. Acts 8 : 39.

he went on pilgrimage to meet his God in distant Horeb, Jehovah's ancient home, scene of the ancient covenant, now broken by the people. There to the despondent man Jehovah revealed his quiet majesty, heralded indeed by storm, earthquake, and fire, but other and greater though gentler than they.[1] Thus cheered and strengthened, he was divinely charged to inaugurate the doom of the idolaters, by anointing the two kings—one over Aram, and one over Israel—through whom that doom would be wrought. Jehovah's cause, he was divinely assured, would survive. It was not so desperate as he had deemed; there were others besides himself who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

The call of Elisha (19 : 19-21)

So[2] Elijah cast his own prophetic mantle upon Elisha, whom he found ploughing, and Elisha arose and followed him and became his servant.

Elijah's championship of justice (21)

Now the king who had supported the Baal worship was also covetous and unjust. Nursing sullen wrath because Naboth refused to surrender to him his ancestral vineyard in Jezreel, he at last gained his end through a cruel murder

[1] The sequel, especially v. 17, shows that this passage is not intended as a rebuke of Elijah's violence. It is a contribution to the spirituality rather than the gentleness of the divine nature.

[2] Apparently there originally stood before v. 19, the account of Elijah's anointing of Hazael and Jehu. "Thence" will then mean "from some spot in northern Israel," which would in no case be very far from Elisha's home in Galilee. The account would then be omitted by the redactor, because in the later narratives it is Elisha who plays the chief part. In 2 K. 8 : 7 it is he who promises the kingdom to Hazael, and in ch 9, it is a disciple of his, inspired by him, who is responsible for the revolution of Jehu.

planned by his wily queen. Swiftly Elijah appeared before him, and in the name of the righteous Jehovah announced his doom, and that of Jezebel, *and of all his posterity—ruin as the ruin of Jeroboam and Baasha;* for with unprecedented wickedness he had followed all the idolatry of the Amorites, seduced thereto by Jezebel.

13. *The Wars and Death of Ahab* (1 K. 20 and 22 : 1-40)

Ahab's war and treaty with Aram (20)

Benhadad, the king of Aram, demanded from his vassal Ahab (who was purposing to throw off the yoke) substantial proof of his homage; and not content with this, he went on to demand the surrender of his capital Samaria.[1] Ahab refused, and replied to his insolence with a proverb which provoked Benhadad to attack. A prophet assured Ahab of the victory, and with about seven thousand men he inflicted a crushing defeat upon the careless and confident Benhadad. The prophet warned him to prepare for another assault in the coming year. The assault came. Fancying that Jehovah was but a god of the hills, who could not help his people in the plains, the Arameans mustered in the plain of Jezreel, and a man of God again foretold the victory of Ahab, whereby Jehovah would dispel the illusion of the Arameans. Again the Arameans sustained a phenomenal de-

[1] This seems to be the general sense of this obscure passage. The second demand, which Ahab refuses, is, in our present text, practically a repetition of, not an advance upon, the first which he concedes. The LXX punctuates v. 7 so as to suggest that the first demand was for his property, and the second for his family; but this is not in agreement with vv. 4, 5.

feat, and Benhadad had to hide. But Ahab mercifully spared him, and a treaty was concluded which gave Ahab the right to the cities which Omri had lost to Aram, and the right of trading in the Aramean capital, Damascus. In an acted parable, which illustrated the truth that disobedience to the divine word meant death, a prophet foretold his doom for frustrating Jehovah's purpose by letting Benhadad go.

Ahab and Jehoshaphat, before attacking Ramoth, consult the prophets : Micah's prophecy (22 : 1-28)

Peace lasted for three years. Then Ahab[1] called upon his vassal, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, to help him in an attack on Ramoth in Gilead, which was still in the hands of Aram. First, however, he consulted the assembled prophets at the request of Jehoshaphat. Then as their unanimous assurance of success roused Jehoshaphat's suspicions, he sent for the sincere and stern Micah, who only spoke as Jehovah bade. At first he, too, gave an ironical[2] assurance of success ; but when put upon his oath he spoke out the melancholy truth revealed to him in vision : how that as Jehovah sat upon his throne in heaven, in council with his assembled servants, one spirit had offered to deceive the prophets of Ahab, and so lure him to his doom. For this bold, unwelcome message, Micah was rewarded with a prison ; but he challenged the coming days to confirm his word.

Despite this gloomy message, the two kings went forth

[1] Encouraged by the Assyrian attacks upon Damascus.

[2] Or the meaning may be, "In fulfilment of Jehovah's purpose that Ahab should be deceived," cf. 2 K. 8 : 10.

Ahab slain (22 : 29-40)

to battle against the king of Aram in Ramoth, where, notwithstanding his disguise, Ahab was slain. He was brought to Samaria and buried there. Thus was fulfilled the ignominious doom foretold by the prophet.[1]

14. *Ahaziah, King of Israel* (1 K. 22 : 51 to 2 K. 1 : 18), 853-851 B. C.

Elijah pronounces doom on the apostate Ahaziah (1 K. 22 : 51-53; 2 K. 1 : 2-18)

In Israel, Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, *who walked in the way of his father and mother and of Jeroboam, and provoked Jehovah by serving Baal.* Thus it was a Philistine god that he consulted when sick. Suddenly Elijah appeared before his messengers with his word of doom: "Is there no God in Israel to consult? Say to your master, 'Thou shalt die.'" With that he vanished. Twice did Ahaziah send an armed force to seize Elijah; and twice he called down upon them the fire of heaven which consumed them. But the third captain showed due reverence to the prophet of God, and with his force Elijah went back to the king and repeated his words of doom. And he died, as Elijah had said. He was succeeded by his brother Joram.

15. *Elisha as Elijah's Successor* (2 K. 2 : 1-25)

Elijah's exodus in fire (2 : 1-15)

When Jehovah was about to take Elijah[2] up into heaven, Elisha clung to his side, and vowed not to leave him. After crossing the Jordan, whose waters Elijah had smit-

[1] According to 1 K. 21 : 19 (cf. 13) this was to happen in Jezreel.

[2] Several considerations suggest that this tale belongs to the Elisha, not to the Elijah group.

ten with his prophetic mantle, Elisha begged that a double portion of his spirit might rest upon him, as upon a first-born son. The spirit would be his, said Elijah, if he had the eye for the vision. Even as they spoke, swiftly there appeared a chariot and horses of fire, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven, invisible to the common eyes of the sons of the prophets, but seen of Elisha, who cried, "My father, my father! the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." Left alone, with the mantle of his master, Elisha proved his power, and the sons of the prophets did him obeisance.

Now that Elijah was not—for he was sought and could not be found—Elisha's influence grew. He performed a miracle of grace, healing deadly waters; and children who mocked him met with an awful doom. Elisha's miracle of healing, and prophetic dignity (2 : 16-25)

16. *Elisha's Activity from the Reign of Joram, King of Israel* (851–842 B. C.), *to that of Joash* (3 : 1 to 8 : 15 and 13 : 14–21).

In Israel, Ahaziah was succeeded by his brother Joram,[1] who introduced a religious reform, *but nevertheless cleaved to the sins of Jeroboam*. Joram, king of Israel (3 : 1-3)

During his reign the king of Moab revolted from Israel,[2] and refused the customary tribute. Whereupon Joram called upon his vassal, Jehoshaphat of Judah, to aid him in His war with Moab (3 : 4-19)

[1] The synchronism in 3 : 1 is differently given in 1 : 17.

[2] 3 : 5 = 1 : 1.

reducing Moab, and the king of Edom accompanied them as vassal of Judah.[1] On their march round the southern end of the Dead Sea they found themselves without water. The pious Jehoshaphat proposed to consult a prophet. Elisha, to whom they went, at first ironically sent Joram to the Baal prophets of his father and mother for answer. Then, moved to the prophetic mood by strains of music, he foretold the filling of trenches by water without wind or rain, promised victory, and counselled them to ruin the wells, trees, and goodly land.

Israel retires (3 : 20-27)

Every word came to pass. Under a mistaken impression, the Moabites attacked, only to be repulsed once and again. In desperation, the king of Moab offered his eldest son in sacrifice to Chemosh, his god. Then the tide turned, and Israel had to retire to their own land.

The miracle of the oil cruse (4 : 1-7)

For the widow of a dead prophet, whose sons were to be held in slavery for payment of a debt, Elisha, like his master,[2] wrought a miracle which saved both her and them.

The raising of the widow's son (4 : 8-37)

In return for the hospitality which a certain devout and wealthy woman had shown him, Elisha promised her a son ; and in strange wise, his word was fulfilled. One day the child received a sunstroke and died. Straightway his mother hastened to Carmel, to speak with Elisha. In pity, the prophet sent on his servant with his staff [3] in haste,

[1] Cf. 1 K. 22 : 47 ; 2 K. 8 : 20. [2] 1 K. 17 : 8-16.
[3] Suggesting that the staff was expected to work a cure.

but to no purpose. When he came himself, the child was dead ; but in answer to his prayer, as once in answer to his master's,[1] the child was miraculously raised from the dead, and his mother did obeisance to the prophet.

Elisha procures the restoration of her property (8 : 1-6)

He then told her of the coming famine, and bade her sojourn away from Israel. On her return, she appealed to the king for the recovery of her property which, in her absence, had been appropriated. Hearing from the prophet's servant of his master's miraculous power, and how he had used it in bringing back this very woman's son from the dead, the king restored to her, as the prophet's friend, all that had been hers, with increase.

The miracle of the gourds (4 : 38-41)

During the famine, Elisha miraculously rendered harmless some deadly gourds of a wild vine which, in their distress, the famished sons of the prophets were eating.

The miracle of the feeding (4 : 42-44)

Again he fed a great multitude with a single offering of first fruits, and there was enough and to spare.

The miracle of the floating iron (6 : 1-7)

While the sons of the prophets were building for themselves a larger home on the banks of the Jordan, one of them let a borrowed axe-head fall into the water. Elisha miraculously brought it to the surface.

The healing of Naaman (5 : 1-19)

Again the prophet proved his power by a miraculous healing. It happened thus. The king of Aram sent Naaman, the captain of his army, who was a leper, to the vassal king of Israel with money and instructions to see to his recovery. Hearing of the king's perplexity and

[1] 1 K. 17 : 21, 22.

conscious of his own prophetic power, Elisha interposed. He bade the leprous captain wash seven times in Jordan, the river of subject Israel. At first Naaman angrily refused; but afterwards he yielded and was healed. His miraculous cure drew from him a confession of faith in Israel's God as the only God in all the earth, and he took away to his own land soil from the land of Israel that he might be able to worship Israel's God on Israel's soil. Elisha suffered him, as the king's servant, to bow with him in the temple of Rimmon.[1]

Leprosy the reward of covetousness: Gehazi smitten (5 : 20-27)

The prophet would take no reward of the captain; but his servant was not like-minded. With a lie he won a present from Naaman, and he won with the gift the leprosy of the giver; for Elisha read his heart and uttered his doom.

Elisha's devices against the Arameans (6 : 8-23)

The king of Aram sent bands to ambush the king of Israel; but Elisha, who had open eyes for the wiles of the foe, always warned the king, to the surprise of the Aramean, who suspected treachery in his own court. On learning that his real enemy was the prophet Elisha, he sent a host with horses and chariots to take him prisoner; but, unseen of all but God-opened eyes was another host to match—even horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. Blindly[2] the host was led on by Elisha to the

[1] "For only on his own land is Jehovah a jealous God." (Benzinger.)

[2] Was the blindness of the Aramean host originally blindness to the forces *round Elisha* (cf. v. 17)?

capital of Israel, and there their eyes were opened—there, in the midst of their foes. But the generous prophet saved them from the vengeance of the king, and the bands retired.

Famine in Samaria : Elisha's word fulfilled (6 : 24 to 7 : 20)

In the siege of Samaria by the king of Aram, when the distress was at its sorest, and the king of Israel, losing his faith in Jehovah, had threatened the life of Elisha, the prophet foretold speedy deliverance from famine; and so it was. For through four outcast lepers the welcome news that the panic-stricken besiegers had taken to sudden flight, was brought to the incredulous king. After due precaution, the beleaguered people went out and spoiled the tents of their foes. Thus was Elisha's prophecy fulfilled, and the nobleman who had doubted his word, perished as the prophet had foretold.

Elisha's influence on the Aramean succession (8 : 7-15)

Benhadad of Aram, who had fallen sick, sent Hazael with a present to his life-long foe, the prophet Elisha, to learn the issue of his sickness. The issue was to be death ;[1] but Elisha disarmed his suspicion by promising recovery, for Jehovah had a purpose to fulfil through the succession of the ruthless Hazael, the vision of whose cruelties brought tears to Elisha's eyes. In accordance

[1] The Massoretes, to remove the appearance of falsehood, have substituted the word "not" for the original word "to him." Both words have the same sound in Hebrew (*lō*). In this way, the words "Say *to him* 'Thou shalt surely recover,'" have become, "Say, 'Surely thou shalt *not* recover.'"

with the prophet's word, Hazael succeeded[1] to the throne.[2]

Elisha's dying promise to Joash (13 : 14-19)

As Elisha drew near his end, the king of Israel, who was now Joash, wept and said, "My father, my father! the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof;"[3] for he had been Israel's mainstay in the long war with Aram. As a parting benediction, the aged prophet, with word and symbol, promised him at least limited victory over Aram.

The last miracle (13 : 20, 21)

After death he was mighty as in life. By contact with his bones, a dead man came to life again and stood upon his feet.

17. *Jehoshaphat, King of Judah* (1 K. 22 : 41-50), 876-851 B. C.

Jehoshaphat, king of Judah (22 : 41-50)

In Judah, Asa was succeeded by his son Jehoshaphat, a good king, who removed the remnant of the immoral worship. *Nevertheless the high places were not taken away: on them the people still sacrificed and burnt incense.* After the wreck of a merchantman, Jehoshaphat rejected the proposal of the king of Israel to undertake voyages with him in common.

[1] Probably by the murder of the king.

[2] Here probably followed in this source the story of the accession of Jehu (cf. 1 K. 19 : 15, 16) corresponding to ch. 9 which, at least in its present form, does not belong to this group.

[3] This phrase has here a more political significance (cf. 6 : 12) than it could have in its application to Elijah, 2 : 12. There it was suggested by, even if it did not allude to, the chariot and horses of fire.

18. *Jehoram, King of Judah* (2 K. 8 : 16-24), 851-843 B. C.

In Judah, Jehoshaphat was succeeded by his son Jehoram. *He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab; for* he had married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab. *Yet Jehovah spared Judah for the sake of his promise to David.* Jehoram, king of Judah (2 K. 8 : 16-19)

In his time Edom, which had been Judah's vassal, revolted, and her example was followed by Libnah. Revolt of Edom and Libnah (8 : 20-24)

19. *Ahaziah, King of Judah* (2 K. 8 : 25-27), 843-842 B. C.

In Judah, Jehoram was succeeded by his son Ahaziah. *He walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah; for his mother was Ahab's daughter.* Ahaziah, king of Judah (8 : 25-27)

20. *Jehu, King of Israel* (2 K. 9 and 10), 842-814 B. C.

The days of Ahab's dynasty were numbered. In the absence of Joram from Ramoth,[1] which Israel was guarding from the assaults of Aram, Elisha sent a prophet to Jehu, the commander-in-chief, to anoint him king. This the prophet did, *and he laid upon Jehu the charge to destroy all the house of Ahab, in vengeance for the blood of the prophets slain, and uttered a divine word of doom on the house of Ahab and on Jezebel.* Jehu anointed king of Israel (9 : 1-10)

Jehu, now openly acknowedged king by the army, con-

[1] Cf. 1 K. 22 : 3.

The murder of Joram, Ahaziah and Jezebel (9 : 11-37) [1]

spired against Joram who, with Ahaziah of Judah, was then in Jezreel, whither he had gone to recover from the wounds that the Arameans had dealt him in Ramah. Jehu cunningly contrived to reach Jezreel before the kings got knowledge of the conspiracy. When at last they heard that Jehu was near, suspecting the worst, they went forth against the rebel—forth to their doom; for Jehu pierced king Joram to the heart with an arrow, and had his body thrown into Naboth's field, in fulfilment of the prophetic word.[2] He also had Ahaziah slain; and Jezebel, the idolatrous queen—resolved to meet her fate with dignity—he gave over to a death of shame and horror in the field of Jezreel, in accordance with the word of Elijah.[3] Thus the cruel and idolatrous house of Ahab perished.

Murder of the princes of Israel and Judah (10 : 1-14)

The leading men in the capital were only too willing to come to terms with one who had shown such authority and violence; and instead of adopting his tentative suggestion to set one of the princes on the throne, they fulfilled his real desire by slaying them all. With feigned surprise at the atrocity, he yet acknowledged their doom to be the fulfilment of Jehovah's word concerning the house of Ahab. After rooting out that whole house, he also slew forty-two princes of Judah.

[1] The substance of 9 : 14, 15 is carried back to 8 : 28, 29, to introduce the story of Jehu.

[2] Cf. 1 K. 21 : 19. This ignores the fulfilment in 1 K. 22 : 38, which is by a later hand.

[3] 1 K. 21 : 23.

In his crusade against the Baal worship, he was supported by Jonadab and his nomad Rechabites, who were zealous for Jehovah, and hated the life and worship of Canaan. Then he cunningly aimed his decisive blow at the Baal worship. Under pretext of offering a sacrifice to the Baal, he gathered all the Baal worshippers together into a temple, where they were summarily slain and the symbols of their worship destroyed. *Thus Jehu destroyed the Baal out of Israel. But he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam and the calf worship. Jehovah, however, promised that his dynasty would stand till the fourth generation because he had executed his purpose upon the house of Ahab.* Destruction of the Baal worship (10 : 15-31)

In the course of his reign, which lasted twenty-eight years, Hazael of Aram won from Israel most of the district east of the Jordan.[1] Hazael's eastern campaign (10 : 32-36)

21. *Athaliah, Queen of Judah:* 842-836 B. C.; *The Revolution of Jehoiada* (2 K. 11)

Now that the throne of Judah was vacant by the death of Ahaziah, the queen mother,[2] Athaliah, secured her own seat upon the throne by the murder of all the seed royal —all but Joash, son of Ahaziah, who had been hidden by his Athaliah, queen of Judah : Jehoiada's revolution and reform (11)

1 Thus confirming Elisha's fears (8 : 12). Aram enjoyed a temporary peace after an unsuccessful campaign of Assyria against her in 839 B. C., and was thus free to attack Israel.

2 8 : 26.

aunt.[1] But after a reign of six years, a plot was formed by Jehoiada, the priest of the temple, supported by the foreign body-guard—to bring to an end the power of Ahab's idolatrous daughter. The scheme was successful. The queen was slain, and Joash proclaimed king. As the revolution was largely inspired by religious motives, Jehoiada made people and king pledge themselves to Jehovah, and vow to be his people exclusively. At once they proved their zeal by vigorously stamping out the Baal worship with all that pertained thereto.

22. *Joash, King of Judah* (2 K. 12), 836-796 B. C.

Joash, king of Judah: the restoration of the temple (12 : 1-16)

With the exception of the worship on the high places, which was still maintained, Joash did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah. His succession had been a triumph of the cause of Jehovah, and he took steps to secure that he should be worthily represented by his temple, which had fallen into neglect.[2] The priests, however, were in no hurry to apply to the repairs of the temple the gifts and taxes that came into their hands. At length Joash, rebuking the priests, took the matter firmly in hand, and the money thenceforth secured by his new device was devoted to the repairs and paid directly to the workmen, who, unlike the priests, dealt honorably. The money obtained

[1] Wife of Jehoiada, who organized the revolution (2 Chr. 22 : 11).

[2] Likely under Athaliah, who, in matters of worship, was no doubt her father's daughter.

from the guilt and sin offerings was not so devoted; it went to the priests.

Hazael of Aram, besides harassing[1] Israel and reducing the Philistine Gath, turned his face threateningly toward Jerusalem. Joash only saved his capital by surrendering the treasures of temple and palace. At last he was slain in a conspiracy by his servants.[2]

Hazael's western campaign: the death of Joash (12 : 17-21)

23. *Jehoahaz, King of Israel* (2 K. 13 : 1-9, 22), 814-797 B. C.

During the reign of Joash, Jehu's son Jehoahaz succeeded to the throne of Israel. *But he followed the sins of Jeroboam; so Jehovah in anger abandoned them* to the assaults of Aram under Hazael and his son,[3] who inflicted crushing losses on Israel, and harassed them all the days of the king.

Jehoahaz, king of Israel, oppressed by Aram (13 : 1-3, 7-9, 22)

24. *Joash, King of Israel* (2 K. 13 : 10-13, 23-25), 797-781 B. C.

Jehoahaz was succeeded by his son Joash, *who departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam. Yet Jehovah*

[1] As recorded in 13 : 3, cf. 10 : 32.

[2] Perhaps due to discontent fostered by the invasion; perhaps in revenge for the murder of Zechariah, cf. 2 Chr. 24 : 20-25.

[3] "*But Jehovah was moved by Jehoahaz's entreaty, and for answer, he sent a deliverer*" (Joash, 13 : 25? or Jeroboam II. 14 : 28? or the Assyrians?). Besides being obviously in the style of the programme (see page 93) of the Book of Judges, this passage (13 : 4-6) interrupts and contradicts the context.

Joash, king of Israel (13 : 10, 11); his victories over Aram (13 : 23-25); his death (13 : 12, 13= 14 : 15, 16)

was graciously mindful of his covenant with the patriarchs, and therefore Joash, seizing his opportunity on the death of Hazael[1] was enabled to recover the cities on the west Jordan which the Arameans had taken from his father. He died and was buried in Samaria.

25. *Amaziah, King of Judah* (2 K. 14 : 1-22), 796-782 B. C.

Amaziah, king of Judah (14 : 1-6)

About the beginning of the reign of Joash over Israel, Amaziah, the son of Joash of Judah, succeeded to the throne of Judah. *With the exception of the worship on the high places which was still maintained, he did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah, only not like David.* As soon as his throne was secure, he slew the murderers of his father, but not their children :[2] *that is forbidden in the Book of Deuteronomy.*[3]

His war with Edom and Israel (14 : 7-14)

Amaziah had warlike ambitions. In a successful invasion of Edom, he seized the capital of the country. Then, desirous of throwing off the suzerainty of Israel, he sent King Joash a challenge. Joash, in a parable, ironically pointed out the folly of such a challenge, but on further provocation accepted it, took the proud king prisoner, destroyed part of the wall of his capital and carried off to his own capital the treasures of temple and palace.

[1] Besides, Aram's hands were tied by an Assyrian invasion.
[2] As was still the custom in Elijah's time; cf. 9 : 26.
[3] 24 : 16.

He, too, like his father, met his end through a conspiracy. He was succeeded by his son Azariah,[1] who renewed the trade with the Red Sea by fortifying Elah, which Edom afterwards recovered.[2] Accession of Uzziah : his trade (14 : 17-22 and 16 : 6)

26. *Jeroboam II., King of Israel* (2 K. 14 : 23-29), 781-740 B. C.

During the reign of Amaziah over Judah, Joash's son Jeroboam II. succeeded to the throne of Israel. *He departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam I.* In the course of his long reign, he extended the dominion of Israel to its ideal borders, *according to the word of Jonah. For Jehovah in pity* for Israel's bitter affliction and desolation at the hands of Aram[3] *saved them* through Jeroboam. Jeroboam II., king of Israel (14 : 23-29)

27. *Azariah, King of Judah* (2 K. 15 : 1-7), 782-740 B. C.

During the reign of Jeroboam over Israel. Amaziah's son, Azariah, succeeded to the throne of Judah. *With the exception of the worship on the high places, which was still maintained, he did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah.* In the course of his long reign he was smitten Uzziah, king of Judah (15 : 1-7)

[1] Better known as Uzziah 15 : 32, 2 Chr. 26 : 1.

[2] In 16 : 6, which cannot be in its proper place, Edom is to be read for Aram. The mistake led to the addition in that passage, of Rezin's name. Between the Hebrew words for Aram and Edom there is only a "tittle" of difference.

[3] Cf. v. 28.

with leprosy, and therefore had to dwell apart. Consequently the government was in the hands of Jotham, his son.

28. *Zechariah, King of Israel* (2 K. 15 : 8-12), 740 B. C.

Zechariah, king of Israel (15 : 8-12)

During the reign of Azariah of Judah, Jeroboam's son Zechariah succeeded to the throne of Israel, which he held only six months. *He departed not from the sins of Jeroboam*, and was slain in a conspiracy by Shallum, who succeeded him. Thus Jehu's dynasty stood until the fourth generation, *according to the word of Jehovah.*[1]

29. *Shallum, King of Israel* (2 K. 15 : 13-15), 740 B. C.

Shallum, king of Israel (15 : 13-15)

Shallum had reigned but a month when he was slain by Menahem.

30. *Menahem, King of Israel* (2 K. 15 : 16-22), 740-737 B. C.

Menahem, king of Israel (15 : 16-22)

Menahem departed not from the sins of Jeroboam. He secured the throne only after much cruelty and bloodshed and maintained it[2] by the payment of a ruinous subsidy to the Assyrian king, who was now turning his attention to the far west.

[1] 10 : 30.

[2] Hardly so long as ten years: probably not more than six, and possibly only three or four.

31. *Pekahiah, King of Israel* (2 K. 15 : 23-26), 737-736 B. C.

Menahem was succeeded by his son Pekahiah. *He too departed not from the sins of Jeroboam.* After a reign of two years he was slain in a conspiracy by Pekah, who succeeded to the throne. Pekahiah, king of Israel (15 : 23-26)

32. *Pekah, King of Israel* (2 K. 15 : 27, 28, 30, 31), 736-733 B. C.

Pekah departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, and he was slain in a conspiracy after a reign of about three years, by Hoshea (who reigned as vassal of Assyria).[2] Pekah, king of Israel[1] (15 : 27, 28, 30, 31)

33. *Jotham, King of Judah* (2 K. 15 : 32-38), 740-736 B. C.

During Pekah's reign over Israel, Azariah's son Jotham succeeded to the throne of Judah. *With the exception of the worship on the high places, which was still maintained, he did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah;* and he built the upper gate of the temple. Jotham, king of Judah (15 : 32-38)

34. *Ahaz, King of Judah* (2 K. 16), 736-725 B. C.

Jotham was succeded by his son Ahaz, who *walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and* offered his son in Ahaz, king of Judah (16 : 1-4)

[1] Twenty (v. 27) is inconsistent with the Assyrian inscriptions.

[2] This is the effect of the cause related in 16 : 5-9.

sacrifice to his God, *after the manner of the nations, which Jehovah drove out, and worshipped on the high places.*

He appeals to Assyria, which reduces northern Israel and Aram in 734 B. C. (16 : 5, 7-9 ; 15 : 29)

(Taking advantage of the absence of the Assyrian king in the far east) Rezin, king of Aram, and Pekah, king of Israel, sought to coerce Ahaz [1] into common action against Assyria, and to this end besieged him in his own capital. But with the offer of a heavy tribute, taken from the treasures of temple and palace, he appealed to the Assyrian king, who, nothing loath, answered with an army which ravaged the district of Galilee, captured Damascus, and carried the population of both districts away to the far east.

Ahaz's altar (16 : 10-16)

Seeing an altar which took his fancy, while in Damascus to offer his homage to Tiglath-pileser, Ahaz sent to the priest Urijah at Jerusalem a pattern of it, with instructions to have one erected by his return.[2] It was set up in the place of the old altar, and on it were offered the public, private, and royal sacrifices.

Heavy tribute to Assyria (16 : 17-20)

Besides making other changes in the temple, Ahaz had appropriated some of the temple vessels in order to secure money for the payment of tribute to Assyria.

[1] Cf. 15 : 37 which puts the matter theologically.

[2] This was probably intended as a compliment to Assyria.

35. *Hoshea, King of Israel, and the Fall of the Northern Kingdom* (2 K. 17 : 1-6; 18 : 9-12), 733-721 B. C.

Hoshea: the fall of Samaria and the captivity of Israel (17 : 1-6 and 18 : 9-12)

During the reign of Ahaz over Judah, Hoshea succeeded to the throne of Israel, *and he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, but not like his predecessors.* The king of Assyria, discovering that he had thrown off his allegiance, and was seeking the support of Egypt, captured him, took his capital, Samaria, after a siege of three years,[1] and carried a large portion of the population away to Assyria, *because they obeyed not the voice of Jehovah their God, but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moses commanded.*

36. *Three Lessons of the Fall* (2 K. 17 : 7-23, 34b-40)

First lesson: a punishment for Israel's perversity (17 : 18, 21-23)

The exile was the divine punishment sent upon Israel in accordance with the words of the prophets, because they had walked in all the sins of Jeroboam.

Second lesson: the result of persistent idolatry (17 : 7-17, 19, 20)

Many and divers had been their sins. Forgetful of the gracious God of the olden days, they had adopted the idolatrous worship of the heathen on the high places, turned deaf ears to the warnings of the prophets, and abandoned themselves to image-worship, star-worship, Baal-worship, sorcery, even to human sacrifice. Judah also had followed only too surely in the footsteps of Israel. Therefore Jehovah cast them out of his sight.

With their old perversity, they did not fear their own God, and

[1] The siege was begun by Shalmaneser IV.; but the city was taken by his great general and successor, Sargon, in 721 B. C.

Third lesson: the consequence of deliberate disobedience (17 : 34b-40)

they would not obey his written word which promised them deliverance from all their enemies, if they would fear him only—their gracious Jehovah—and give no heed to other gods.

37. *The Later History of Samaria* (2 K. 17 : 24-34a, 41)

The origin of the Samaritans (17 : 24-28, 41)

To repeople the partly depopulated cities of Samaria, the king of Assyria sent colonists from Babylon and elsewhere. But they did not know how to worship Jehovah, the God of their new country, and their ignorance cost them some lives, which fell a prey to the ravages of lions sent by Jehovah. So a priest was brought back from the deported population of Israel, to teach them the religion of Jehovah. *Thus they learned to worship Jehovah without abandoning their native worship.*

The Samaritan cult (17 : 29-34)

Alongside of the Jehovah worship they maintained, and to this day maintain, their old ancestral worship and practices upon the high places on which the former inhabitants worshipped.

XII

TO THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH (2 Kings 18 to 25)

1. *The Events of Hezekiah's Reign* (2 K. 18 to 20), 725-696 B. C.

Hezekiah's reformation (18 : 1-8)

During the reign of Hoshea over Israel, Ahaz's son Hezekiah succeeded to the throne of Judah; *and he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according*

to all that David his father had done. He *removed the high places,*[1] *and* abolished all forms of image worship, even such as had venerable sanction, like the brazen serpent. *Never was a king of Judah like him. He trusted in Jehovah, was faithful to him, and was prospered by him wherever he went. Thus,* he threw off his allegiance to the Assyrian king, and he also conquered the Philistine city of Gaza.

Sennacherib's western campaign (18 : 13-16)

Sennacherib advanced against the rebellious Judah, and captured all her walled cities. In alarm for the capital, Hezekiah secured immunity from attack by humbly offering a very heavy tribute, for which not only the palace but even the temple had to be stripped.

Judah's crisis (18 : 17 to 19 : 37)

The Rabshakeh's insolent demand (18 : 17-25)

But on second thoughts Sennacherib determined not to lose his hold on so important a fortress as Jerusalem. He therefore sent a small detachment of his army to secure its surrender. One of his high officers, the Rabshakeh, in an insolent address to certain of Hezekiah's officials, pointed out the folly of depending either upon man or upon their God. Egypt was but a broken reed. And as for Jehovah —how could Hezekiah expect any deliverance from him, when he had

(19 : 9b-19)

Sennacherib sent an insolent letter to Hezekiah, pointing out the folly of depending upon the promises of his God against so resistless a foe as the Assyrians, against whom not a single god of any other nation had been able to save those who had trusted in them. Now Hezekiah spread the letter

[1] If, however, 18 : 22 is original, then this will have been part of Hezekiah's reform, which Kittel thinks possible.

lately robbed him of all his seats of worship but one? What match was the Israelite cavalry for the Assyrian? Besides, the Assyrian invasion had the direct sanction of Jehovah.

His taunt (18 : 26-37)

Hezekiah's officials asked the Rabshakeh to speak in Aramaic, because it was unfamiliar to the Jews who manned the walls. With a coarse threat he refused, and went on, as before, in Hebrew, to intimidate the people into disbelief in Hezekiah and in his assurance of victory through Jehovah. Submission, he said, would mean comfort —first in their own land, and then in the better land to which he would take them. Nothing was more ridiculous than to believe in their God. Had the gods of other nations — Aram, for example — saved those who fondly trusted them, from Assyria's strong arm? No more would Jehovah save Jerusalem.

before Jehovah in his temple, and earnestly prayed him to rebuke the blasphemous insolence of Sennacherib. In very truth, he was the God of all—the living and the only God: the gods of whose destruction the Assyrians boasted were no gods. Let Jehovah but interpose, he prayed, to save his people, and the deliverance would convince the world that he was the only God.

Then Isaiah sent Hezekiah the message that his prayer had been heard.[1] He assured him in the name of Jehovah that it would not come to a siege;

(19 : 20, 32-35)

[1] Here are interpolated two oracles, a taunt song (21-28) in verse, and a sign (29-31) in prose. The following is the substance of *the song:*

With scornful laughter Zion's daughter greets thee,
Thee who hast blasphemed Israel's holy God.
Proudly thou boastest no land can resist thee:
Though all the while thou art but Jahweh's tool,
Working his ancient purpose on the nations.

Isaiah's confident prophecy; Sennacherib retires; and Jerusalem is saved (19 : 1-9a, 36, 37)

In dire distress, the king sent his sorrowful officials to Isaiah the prophet, with the request that he would intercede with his God : perchance he would hearken to him. Nor was he disappointed. In the name of Jehovah, Isaiah bade them not fear the blasphemous words of Assyria : the king would hear a rumor which would cause him to return to his own land, and there he would be slain. And so it came to pass : for at the rumor of the approach of the Ethiopian king, he departed from Libnah which he was besieging and returned to Nineveh, where he was slain by his sons. for the Assyrian king would return by the way that he came. *Jehovah would defend the city for his own and David's sake.* And so it came to pass : for (by a pestilence) the angel of Jehovah slew great numbers of his army (and he retired to his own land).

Hezekiah's sickness and recovery (20 : 1-11)

Hezekiah, sick unto death, sought Jehovah with tears to remember the sincerity of his past, and deliver him. For answer, the prophet Isaiah brought a message from Jehovah that in three days he would recover, and that his life would be lengthened by fifteen years ; and it was so. By the application of figs, the boil was healed and he re-

> Yea, all thy doings are before mine eyes,
> And for thy rage and insolence I'll tame thee—
> Hook in thy nose and bridle in thy lips—
> And bring thee back the very way thou camest.

And this shall be *the sign :* After two years of devastated fields, in the third ye shall sow and reap and eat ; and the Jews that are left in Jerusalem shall again strike root and bear new fruit. The zeal of Jehovah shall accomplish this.

covered. To reassure Hezekiah's faith in his speedy recovery, Isaiah, in the name of Jehovah, gave him his choice of a sign; and the sign came to pass.[1]

Babylonian embassy; Isaiah's prophecy (20 : 12-19)

Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon, sent an embassy to Hezekiah to congratulate him on his recovery;[2] and Hezekiah showed them his numerous treasures. Then Isaiah seized the occasion to prophesy, in the name of Jehovah, that all those treasures would one day be carried away to Babylon and that some of the Judæan princes would one day be eunuchs of the Babylonian king.[3] These stern words Hezekiah listened to with resignation, in the assurance that there would be peace so long as he lived.

Hezekiah's building operations (20 : 20, 21)

Hezekiah built the pool of Siloam and by a subterranean conduit[4] secured for Jerusalem a water-supply unassailable in war.

[1] The sign is here belated, as the recovery is already a fact (v. 7). In Isa. 38 : 7 it is simply a miraculous sign; here, by the choice, the miracle is enhanced.

[2] Ostensibly; but in reality, doubtless, to solicit Judah's aid in a revolt from Assyria.

[3] In this form, the prophecy could hardly be original. With the substitution, however, of Assyrian for Babylonian, we may have an approximation to the original prophecy.

[4] From this tunnel is supposed to come the famous inscription discovered in 1880, though both tunnel and inscription might be a little earlier (cf. Isa. 8 : 6).

2. *Manasseh, King of Judah* (2 K. 21 : 1-18), 696-641 B. C.

Hezekiah was succeeded by his son Manasseh, *who did hideous evil in the sight of Jehovah.* He undid his father's reformation, adopting, *as did Ahab,* the Baal worship with its heathen symbols, and star worship—even building altars to the heavenly bodies in the temple courts [1] of Jerusalem, *the city chosen of Jehovah.* He sacrificed his son, dealt in sorcery, *and through his idolatry led the people into hideous disobedience to Jehovah's ancient laws, which if obeyed would have saved them from exile.*

Manasseh of Judah: his idolatry (21 : 1-9)

Prophetic voices were lifted up in protest. *This fearful iniquity,* they said, *would involve Jerusalem and Judah in fearful doom—even the relentless doom of Samaria and the dynasty of Ahab: spoliation, exile, abandonment.* But those honest voices were stifled by cruel persecution.

Prophetic protest and threat of doom (21 : 10-18)

3. *Amon, King of Judah* (2 K. 21 : 19-26), 641-639 B. C.

Manasseh was succeeded by his son Amon, *who did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, like his father Manasseh, and walked in his idolatrous ways.* *So* he was slain in a conspiracy by his servants, who were in their turn promptly slain by the people.

Amon of Judah (21 : 19-26)

[1] In the two courts a post-exilic hand is evident. There was strictly only one court in Solomon's temple; the "other" is the palace court, 1 K. 7 : 8, cf. 2 Chr. 4 : 9.

4. *Josiah, King of Judah* (2 K. 22 : 1 to 23 : 30), 639-608 B. C.

Josiah of Judah: the finding of the book of the law (22)

Amon was succeeded by his son Josiah, who ascended the throne in his eighth year. *He did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah, as did David*, setting himself in his eighteenth year to restore the temple, which (in the last two reigns) had fallen into disgrace and disrepair. In the course of the repairs a momentous discovery was made, no less than the Book of Deuteronomy,[1] found by Hilkiah the priest. As the king reflected on the people's disobedience to its statutes, and read the threats pronounced thereon, he hastened, in sorrow and fear, to consult the will of Jehovah. Huldah the prophetess, to whom his messengers went for counsel, answered in the name of Jehovah that *the threats of the book would assuredly be fulfilled upon city and people, for against their idolatry and apostasy Jehovah's unquenchable anger would be kindled; but Josiah, for his tenderness of heart, would be spared the impending doom.*

Josiah's reformation and passover (23 : 1-14, 24, 25, 15-23)

The moment was critical; so the king gathered the people of Judah and Jerusalem together [2]—priests, prophets, elders, all; and king and people solemnly pledged themselves to a covenant with Jehovah on the basis of the book. Proceeding at once to a radical reform of the worship, he cleansed the temple of all the vessels that had

[1] At least, the legal part : cf. pp. 87, 88.

[2] Some suppose that Josiah seized the opportunity of the passover to gather the people together (21-23).

been used in the worship of Baal, *Ashtoreth*,[1] and the heavenly bodies, tore down the haunts[2] of the immoral worship of Jehovah, and abolished the idolatrous priesthood of the high places, allowing the priests, however, to share, if not in the service, yet in the revenues of the Jerusalem priests. He did away with the human sacrifices offered to Jehovah as king,[3] and destroyed all traces of the sun worship in which his predecessors had indulged, and of the idolatrous worship of Solomon. He also abolished sorcery of all sorts in accordance with the injunctions of the newly discovered book,[4] *and there was no king like him.* He destroyed Jeroboam's famous sanctuary and altar at Bethel. *The bones of the calf-worshippers he took out of their tombs and burnt upon the altar,* but he spared the tomb of the prophet *who had foretold the destruction of the altar at Bethel.*[5] Similarly stern measures he adopted toward all centres of the idolatrous worship. Then in accordance with the injunctions of the Book of the Covenant,[6] he cel-

[1] The same word (*asherah*) as is used in v. 6 to signify the idolatrous wooden pole. Here (v. 4) it seems to be used to signify a goddess, though the existence of a goddess Asherah is disputed. It may be due either to a misunderstanding of *asherah* in its ordinary sense, or to confusion with Ashtoreth.

[2] Or—by a conjectural reading—garments for the immoral worship (v. 7).

[3] The consonants, m l k are those of the word "king," a title of Jehovah. The vowels mōlĕk are intended to suggest the word bōshĕth, shame: cf. p. 162.

[4] Dt. 18 : 11.

[5] 1 K. 13.

[6] Such is now properly its name after the covenant has been made, v. 3; to be distinguished from the older book (Ex. 20 : 22 to 23 : 33) of the same name (Ex. 24 : 7).

ebrated in Jerusalem a great passover festival, the like of which had never been held before.

The doom of Judah inevitable (23 : 26-28)

But the reformation of Josiah could not wipe out the crimes of Manasseh. They remained still unatoned, and for them Jerusalem the chosen must be rejected, and Judah must go into exile like Israel before her.

The death of Josiah (23 : 29, 30)

At last Josiah was slain in battle on the plain of Jezreel, fighting [1] against Pharaoh Necho of Egypt, who had taken advantage of the approaching collapse of Assyria to march north with intent to wrest her western empire from her.

5. *Jehoahaz, King of Judah* (2 K. 23 : 31-34), 608 B. C.

Jehoahaz of Judah (23 : 31-34)

Josiah was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, *who did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah.* He was taken as Pharaoh's prisoner to Egypt, where he died.[2] His land was put under tribute, and his brother Eliakim was set on the throne by Pharaoh, who changed his name [3] to Jehoiakim.

6. *Jehoiakim, King of Judah* (2 K. 23 : 35 to 24 : 7), 608-597 B. C.

To secure tribute for his Egyptian lord, the new king had to assess his people according to the value of their

[1] Either as vassal of Assyria, or perhaps on his own account.

[2] Cf. Jer. 22 : 10-12.

[3] To mark him as his vassal? Cf. 24 : 17.

land. *He did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah.* When Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, broke the power of Egypt, Jehoiakim voluntarily tendered his submission. But in three years he rebelled; and Judah was invaded by bands of peoples both near and far *in accordance with Jehovah's fateful purpose proclaimed by the prophets.* Despite her initial success against them, *Judah was swiftly hastening to the doom of exile, in chastisement for the sins of Manasseh and for the innocent blood that he had shed.*

Jehoiakim of Judah: his rebellion; invasion of Judah (23 : 35 to 24 : 7)

7. *Jehoiachin, King of Judah* (2 K. 24 : 8-16), 597 B. C.

Jehoiakim was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin, *who did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah.* (In consequence of his father's revolt), a Babylonian army laid siege to Jerusalem. After a reign of three months, Jehoiachin with his court surrendered, and they were carried away to Babylon, along with seven thousand trained warriors, one thousand artisans, and the most prominent of his subjects, with vessels and treasures of temple and palace.[1]

Jehoiachin of Judah; first deportation (24 : 8-16)

8. *Zedekiah, King of Judah* (2 K. 24 : 17 to 25 : 21), 597-586 B. C.

On the throne of Judah Nebuchadrezzar set Jehoiachin's uncle, a son of Josiah, changing his name from Mattaniah

Zedekiah of Judah (24 : 17-20a)

[1] Vv. 13, 14 are a later parallel to 15, 16, more interested in the temple, but not wholly unhistorical (cf. Jer. 27 : 18-22), though the numbers are higher.

to Zedekiah. *He did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, his wickedness being the penalty that Jehovah in his wrath sent upon Judah, to prepare the way for exile.*

Zedekiah's rebellion; the fall of Jerusalem; second deportation (24 : 20b to 25 : 21)

Zedekiah rebelled. Nebuchadrezzar with a great army came to reduce the capital. Siege and famine did their worst; and in a year and a half the city fell. The king and his warriors fled. The king was taken in the neighborhood of Jericho. His sons were slain before his eyes. Then he was blinded and carried to Babylon. A month afterward the city was set on fire. Temple, palaces, houses, one and all, were burned and the walls levelled with the ground. All but the poor were carried into captivity, and with the captives went the numerous and costly vessels of the temple. Prominent priests and other officials were taken to Riblah on the Orontes, and executed. Thus did the exile of Judah become a fact.

9. *Gedaliah, Governor of Judah* (2 K. 25 : 22-26)

Gedaliah, governor of Judah, assassinated (25 : 22-26)

Over those who were left in the land, Nebuchadrezzar astutely appointed a native governor, Gedaliah, who[1] was convinced that safety lay in submission to the Babylonians. But in a short time he and his supporters were slain in a conspiracy by Ishmael, a Jewish prince. In fear of Babylonian vengeance, the people fled to the ever ambiguous and futile friendship of Egypt.

[1] Like Jeremiah.

10. *Jehoiachin's Elevation* (2 K. 25 : 27-30), 561 B. C.

Jehoiachin's elevation (25 : 27-30)

The advent of Nebuchadrezzar's successor, Evil-merodach, in 561 B. C. marked a new attitude toward the Jews, and was, as it were, the harbinger of the return. After thirty-seven years of captivity, King Jehoiachin was accorded the first place among the captive kings at court, and continued to receive marks of royal favor as long as he lived.

THE PRIESTLY HISTORIANS

THE PRIESTLY HISTORIANS

I

THE PRIESTLY NARRATIVE OF THE HEXATEUCH

The hope of the Hebrews was hard to slay. They took with them into exile prophetic assurances that they would be brought back again to their own land, and they had those assurances repeated and confirmed by other prophets in the exile. So real was that hope that long before the exile was half over, Ezekiel [1] drew up a programme of worship, resting doubtless upon past usage, for the guidance of the restored community. Here we see not indeed the rise, but the growing prominence of priestly interests. The people could no longer be a nation; they determined to be a church. For good and for evil, the place once taken by the prophet in the guidance of life was now taken by the priest.

An impetus given by the exile to the study of ritual practice

The impulse thus given by memory and hope to the study and elaboration of the law naturally received fresh strength when the return from exile was actually consummated and worship begun. In course of time it gave

That study was encouraged by the course of history after the return

[1] 40 to 48.

rise to a great body of legal literature—all of the Hexateuch that is left after deducting the prophetic strata, and the Book of Deuteronomy which is, in the main, also legislation. There can be no doubt that all this part of the Hexateuch is, in its present form, post-exilic. It improves upon Deuteronomy[1] in sharply distinguishing, as Deuteronomy fails to distinguish, between priests and Levites; its statutes which are to be "everlasting," in some cases contradict Ezekiel's programme, and must therefore be later than that; and it implies a view of the importance and origin of ritual which is not only not held, but is in some cases almost in express terms repudiated by pre-exilic prophets.

It expressed itself in the effort to write the history of the origin of the theocracy

Now this great body of legal literature has come down to us in the main in historical form. The laws are connected with the revelation on Sinai, and introduced by the phrase "Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying." This quasi-historical spirit took one step further and created a priestly account of Israel's early history down to the conquest; but the extremely meagre notices of both the pre-Mosaic and the post-Mosaic age, coupled with the astonishing and altogether disproportionate copiousness of the

[1] So Deuteronomy shows familiarity with the prophetic history (JE) but not with the priestly, which would be strange if it were already in existence. Dt. (1 : 24) like JE (Num. 13 : 23) only sends the spies to Eshcol in S. Canaan; P (Num. 13 : 21) sends them to the extreme north. So Dt. (11 : 6) like JE (Num. 16) knows only of the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram. Korah is peculiar to P.

description of the legislation of Moses, make it quite certain that for the author legislation was the chief thing. In other words the narrative does not even purport to be a history of Israel, but rather of the origin of Israel's religious institutions, which for the post-exilic age were almost the all in all.

It is only with the distinctly narrative elements that we are here called upon to deal; and to appreciate them truly we must remember the spirit in which they were written, and not seek from them more than they were intended to give. History they are not; for that we look elsewhere. There is nothing of that romantic element which invests the prophetic narratives of the Hexateuch with such charm. Consider how bald, as history, would be the statement of Genesis 19 : 29 which is all that the priestly narrative tells us of the tragedy of Sodom, "when God destroyed the cities of the Jordan circle, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt." When the priestly narrative is historically the most improbable, it will usually be found that there is a legislative element not only latent, but explicit. The most notable illustration of this is the story of the war with Midian in Numbers 31, where the extravagance of the detail is admitted by Dillmann to deviate so seriously from historical probability that the fact must have been for the author secondary in importance to the law governing the distribution of

But the interest of the priestly narrative is not strictly historical

booty, which he links with the fact.[1] There are passages even in the patriarchal stories where this author abandons his brief, dry notices for a detailed story; but these very occasions are significant of his temper and attitude. An example is the story of the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17). Repeated emphasis is laid on the "everlasting covenant" which has so much more pictorial a setting in the corresponding Jehovistic story of Genesis 15; but the significant thing is that here the covenant is indissolubly linked with circumcision, one of the "signs" of the peculiar people. The chapter might as fittingly be entitled "The law of circumcision" as "The covenant with Abraham." Similarly the story of Abraham's purchase of the cave of Machpelah is told with an unusual wealth of interesting detail, in order to prove Abraham's title to a lot in the land which was afterwards to be the possession of the theocratic people.

It idealizes the past by ignoring all scandal

Considering the brevity of the priestly pre-Mosaic history, it would perhaps not be fair to deduce much from its silence, especially as there are indications that the narrative must once have been longer than it now is in the completed Hexateuch. But it is not without interest, and may not be without significance, that it ignores all scandal in the patriarchal narratives, just as we have seen that the Elohistic document often endeavored to soften mor-

[1] Num. 31 : 27 (see p. 161). See also the budding of Aaron's rod, Num. 17.

ally objectionable traits or to give them a different turn. While, for instance, the priestly narrator has nothing to say of the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, it is he who tells us that Isaac and Ishmael buried their father.[1] More striking still is his treatment of the departure of Jacob for Mesopotamia, which in this document is called Paddan-aram. Here Jacob is not fleeing from the vengeance of the brother whom he has deceived, but is sent by Isaac to take a wife of his own kinsfolk.[2] It is of a piece with this that on Jacob's return he and Esau only separate "because their substance was too great for them to dwell together."[3]

Marked prominence of priestly interests even in ordinary narrative

There is no place, of course, for distinctively priestly interests until the legislation is reached; but how predominant those interests were for the author of the priestly narrative may be most strikingly seen by a comparison of allusions or incidents related here with their parallels in the earlier prophetic histories. Aaron, for instance, is very prominent in the story of the plagues. In the Elohistic document, they come when *Moses* stretches out his hand or his rod at the command of Jehovah;[4] in the priestly narrative, Jehovah says to Moses, "Say unto *Aaron*, 'stretch forth thy hand' or 'thy rod.'"[5] In the older story of the conquest, it is Joshua who apportions the land;[6] in the priestly story, he is not only associ-

[1] Gen. 25 : 9. [2] Gen. 28 : 1-9. [3] Gen. 36 : 7.
[4] Ex. 9 : 22; 10 : 12, 21. [5] Ex. 8 : 5, 16. [6] Josh. 18 : 10.

ated with Eleazar the priest, but is named after him.[1] On a greater scale, nothing is so instructive as a comparison of the secular rebellion of Dathan and Abiram in the prophetic narrative with the religious rebellion of Korah in the priestly narrative (Num. 16; 17), which even offers two versions of that rebellion. In one view, it is an attack upon the rights of the tribe of Levi;[2] in another, it is an attack of the Levites on the exclusively priestly rights of the sons of Aaron.[3]

The priestly document is from more than one hand; it represents a movement

This leads us to the remark that the priestly document, though it is convenient and not unfair to treat it as a unity, is, like the prophetic documents, not the work of a single author but of a school, and represents a movement. Many minds were at work upon the all-important problem of worship, and the legislation naturally underwent modification and development.[4] The older stratum, for example, represents only the high priest as anointed;[5] the later, the other priests as well.[6] The section on the altar of incense[7] —clearly at variance with the original section (Ex. 27 : 1-8) which implies the existence only of the brazen altar—is only one of many later additions. The most striking proof of the late date up to which these successive revisions were undertaken is seen in the fact that the Greek translation of Exodus 35 to 40, which cannot be earlier than the

[1] Num. 34 : 17; Josh. 14 : 1. [2] Num. 16 : 3. [3] 16 : 10.
[4] The later sections are printed in the paraphrase at the foot of the page.
[5] Ex. 29 : 7. [6] Ex. 28 : 41. [7] Ex. 30 : 1-10.

third century B. C., implies in numerous details quite a different Hebrew text and arrangement from that which we have. Clearly at that time there was no absolutely fixed text of the passage, and this long repetition of Exodus 25 to 29 with its expansions and explanations, proves that the section is itself later than that which it expands.

Its characteristics: order

The literary characteristics of the priestly document, both in its historical and legislative elements, are so striking as to be easily detected, after a very little practice, even in the English translation. One of the most notable —admirably illustrated in the first chapter of Genesis—is its sense of order and system. The days of creation are marked by a fine sequence. Here it is majestic; often it tends to be mechanical. This almost evolutionary sense of order is suggested in another important sphere by the three stages of revelation, which are marked by corresponding changes in the divine name. Before Abraham, God is simply God, *Elohim;* between Abraham and Moses, the bare idea of godhead gives place to the idea of power, and he is *El Shaddai;* in the third and latest stage, he reveals himself to Moses as a god of grace, *Jehovah.* There is a similar sequence in the idea of the covenant. The first covenant is made with Noah, and its sign is the rainbow (Gen. 9). The second is made with Abraham, and its sign is circumcision (Gen. 17). Later, the Sabbath is spoken of as a covenant, and the sign of

the covenant.[1] The love of system is further seen in the arrangement of the patriarchal period into ten "generations," beginning with the heavens and the earth and ending with Jacob. Sometimes this tendency degenerates into artificiality, as in the distribution of Jacob's children in Genesis 46, which makes up the number 70 by including Joseph's sons, gives each of the wives twice as many children as their respective handmaids, and defies the earlier prophetic narratives by assigning to Reuben four sons instead of two, and to Benjamin, the youngest, no less than ten, two of whom are regarded by 1 Chronicles 8 : 3, 4 as his grandsons, and one by the Greek version of Chronicles even as a great-grandson.

Precision.

The zeal for precise statement naturally leads to much repetition. A most extraordinary illustration is to be found in Numbers 7, where six verses are repeated twelve times. It is impossible to imagine the prophetic authors writing in this way; the legal mind is obviously here at work. Another phase of the same tendency is the fondness for accurate numbers, dates, and measurements. It is the priestly writer who twice gives the numbers of the various tribes; who gives the ages of the antediluvians;

[1] Ex. 31 : 16, 17. It does not seem safe, however, to refer this to the covenant at Sinai, which is not distinctly mentioned in this document; but see Lev. 26 : 45. (It may have originally had a place, and been omitted by the redactor of the Hexateuch.) Nor yet is there warrant for assuming that it is the sign of a covenant made with Adam; no such covenant is recorded. There is further the covenant of an everlasting priesthood made with Phinehas, as a reward for his defence of Jehovah's honor. Num. 25 : 13.

who tells us not only the year and the month but the very day of Noah's life on which the flood came, how old Abraham and Ishmael were when they were circumcised, and Moses and Aaron when they appeared before Pharaoh.[1] Indeed—as we have seen—it is usually the priestly chronology that weakens the credibility of a prophetic incident, which, without that chronology, would be quite probable; for example, Abraham's denial of his wife. It is this source, too, which gives such elaborate measurements for the tabernacle and its furniture, and even for Noah's ark. With the strangest precision, it tells us that the waters of the flood prevailed fifteen cubits *above* the high mountains.[2]

An exalted conception of God.

Clearly the priestly school has travelled a long way from the easy and picturesque freedom of the prophetic historians. Yet there is gain as well as loss. The loss in romantic and historic interest has been accompanied by a purer and severer, if in some ways less attractive, theology. The idea of God is now completely freed from its primitive and mythical elements. His glory can be compared to nothing but devouring fire.[3] To describe him as walking in a garden in the cool of the day would be inconceivable. He is high and lifted up above earth and heaven. He has but to speak and things are. The first chapter of Genesis shows how nobly even men whose interests were very largely ritual, could think of God. It is a stately prose-poem which ushers us into the mysterious presence of a God of awful majesty.

[1] Ex. 7 : 7. [2] Gen. 7 : 20. [3] Ex. 24 : 17.

In the following section **bold-faced type** represents the work of the priestly historians; **smaller bold-faced type** represents later additions.

II

THE ORIGIN OF THE THEOCRACY (Genesis to Joshua)

1. *History before Moses* (Genesis)

Man the crown of God's creation (1 : 1 to 2 : 4a)

Out of the primeval chaos, God, by the word of his almighty power, created an ordered world. Stage by stage he fitted it for the living creatures he should create, and every stage was divinely perfect. Then he created the living things to people sea and sky and earth. But last and noblest, and crown of all, was man, whose coming marked a new departure. For God made him to share in the divine nature and destined him to overcome the world,[1] living in peace with the creatures upon the fruits of the earth. God's work was now finished, and it was all divinely fair. So on the last day of his great creation week he rested and thus established for ever the sanctity of the Sabbath.

The ten antediluvians (5 : 1-28, 30-32)

From Adam to Noah, the hero of the Flood—a space of over fifteen hundred years—there were but ten generations, for in those ancient days the span of life was exceeding long. For the most part, however, each generation was shorter than that which went before,[2]

[1] Primarily, of course, in the material sense; there may be an unconscious suggestion of the larger and deeper meaning.

[2] So the Samaritan text.

though Enoch, for his perfect walk with God, was privileged not to see death at all.

God's purpose to destroy the world for its sin (6 : 9-22)

Now the world had grown corrupt; only one man, Noah, lived righteously. So God, in holy wrath, determined to destroy that sinful world by bringing upon it a flood. But with righteous Noah he made a covenant of mercy, and instructed him against the day of the Flood how to save himself and his family and to preserve of every living species a male and female for the world to be.

The Flood (7 : 6 to 8 : 19) [1]

By his obedience and faith, Noah was saved and all the living creatures that were with him in the ark. For God remembered him and them, and caused the waters to decrease which had prevailed for one hundred and fifty days, so that, on the anniversary of the coming of the Flood, he and they went forth.

God's covenant with Noah (9 : 1-17, 28, 29)

They went with the blessing of God, which conveyed the old right of dominion over the world. To this he added the right to partake of flesh as well as fruit, for food. Of the blood of the animals slain, men might not partake; for that, as the symbol of life, was God's. Still more sacred was the blood of man; for he was made in God's image, and the shedding of his blood must be avenged by man. Thus God made his first covenant with man, and with every living thing, never again to destroy them or the earth by a flood; and of this covenant, the rainbow is for all time the sign and pledge.

[1] This section is divided almost equally between P and J.

From Noah sprang the three great groups of peoples, the Japhetic in the north, the Hamitic in the south, and greatest of all, the Semitic. Descendants of Noah (10 : 1-7, 20, 22-24, 31, 32)

For to the Semites belong the Hebrews. Now in the ten[1] generations from Shem to Terah, the father of Abram, the span of human life grew shorter and shorter, as before the Flood. Descendants of Shem (11 : 10-26)

Terah's clan migrated from Ur of the Chaldees toward Haran. Afterward Abram, with wife and nephew and a great company, went on to Canaan, where they settled—uncle and nephew apart.[2] Migration of Abram (11 : 27, 31, 32; 12 : 4, 5; 13 : 6, 11, 12)

As Sarai, his wife, was barren, she gave Abram her Egyptian maid Hagar, who bore him Ishmael. Birth of Ishmael (16 : 1, 3, 15)

When Abram was old, God, revealing himself as El Shaddai, made with him a covenant to be valid for all time, promising him the land of Canaan, descendants exceeding many—among whom should be kings—and The covenant with Abram (17)

[1] So LXX.

[2] Ch. 14 (Abram the warrior, blessed by Melchizedek). In a campaign of four mighty kings from the east against a rebellious conspiracy in the Jordan valley, Lot, Abraham's nephew, was carried captive. Whereupon, warrior like, Abram started in pursuit with certain confederate chiefs, and recovered both the prisoners and the spoil. On his return he received the blessing of the king of Jerusalem, priest of God most high, and in gratitude he gave to God, in the person of his priest, a tenth of the recovered spoil; the rest he nobly restored to its owner, refusing with solemn oath to appropriate it to himself. (Linguistic and other marks make it certain that this curious chapter, round which a controversy has waged, is, in its present form, late. Some, however, at any rate, of its characters are certainly historical, and it may contain historical material.)

that he would be their God. The sign of the covenant was to be infant circumcision, obligatory on every male. Sarai, too, aged though she was, should bear Isaac, the son of the promise. Abram's hopes for Ishmael would indeed be fulfilled; he was destined to be the ancestor of twelve tribes; but it was with Isaac that the covenant would be established. In token of the covenant, the names of Abram and his wife were changed. In that same day was Abraham circumcised, with all the males of his household, according to the divine command.

The deliverance of Lot (19 : 29)

God remembered Abraham, and for his sake saved Lot when he overthrew the cities of the Jordan circle.

The birth of Isaac (21 : 1-5) [1]

Faithful to his promise, God gave Abraham a son through Sarah, and Abraham, faithful to the obligation of the covenant, circumcised him.

The purchase of Machpelah (23)

On Sarah's death, the Hittites generously offered the princely Abraham his choice of a burying-place from among their own. With gratitude he waived their offer, for he could not use an alien grave; but he purchased from them a certain field and cave in Hebron, thus winning in the promised land ground he could legally call his own.

The death of Abraham (25 : 7-11)

In this cave, where he buried Sarah, he was himself buried by Isaac and Ishmael, having died in a good old age; and after his death, God blessed Isaac his son.

The descendants of Ishmael (25 : 12-17)

Ishmael became the ancestor of twelve tribes, according to the divine promise.[2]

[1] Vv. 1 and 2 are each divided equally between J and P. [2] 17 : 20.

Isaac married Rebekah of Paddan-aram, and not till after twenty years did she bear him sons, Esau and Jacob.

The descendants of Isaac (25 : 19, 20, 26b)

To the grief of his parents, Esau married Hittite women.

Esau's Hittite wives (26 : 34, 35, 27 : 46)

But Jacob must not thus err. So Isaac sent him to Rebekah's former home for a wife with the prayer that El Shaddai would continue upon him the blessing vouchsafed to Abraham. Esau, now seeing the mistake of his own marriage, took to wife a granddaughter of Abraham.

Jacob is sent to Paddan-aram (28 : 1-9)

After his sojourn in Paddan-aram, Jacob came with his wives, his children, and his substance to Shechem in Canaan.

Returns to Canaan (31 : 18 to 33 : 18) [1]

The son of the prince of that district sought through his father the hand of Jacob's daughter whom he had ravished. Her brothers, indignant, guilefully consented to intermarriage between the clans, on condition of circumcision. The Shechemites accepted these terms; but the sons of Jacob soon rose, slew all the males, and plundered the city, for the wrong done their sister. The neighboring cities were too panic-stricken to pursue.

The slaughter of the Shechemites (34) [2]

At Bethel, God, revealing himself by his old name of El Shaddai,[3] renewed to Jacob the promise made to Abraham, and gave him a new name, Israel.

The revelation at Bethel (35 : 9-15)

Jacob with his twelve sons, all born in Paddan-aram,

[1] About half a dozen fragments of verses within this section belong to P.

[2] The larger half of this chapter belongs to P, the rest to J.

[3] 17 : 1.

Jacob comes to Isaac; Isaac's death (35 : 22b-29)

came to Isaac in Hebron, once Abraham's home. Then Isaac died in a good old age.

The descendants of Esau (36)

Esau and his clan settled in the hill country of Edom. Of the Edomites there were twelve tribes [1] with twelve princes. Of the older inhabitants of the land, the Horites, whom the Edomites absorbed, there were seven tribes with their subdivisions, and seven chiefs. Esau, the first-born, attained to monarchy before Israel, and eight kings are recorded before the time of Saul. After the close of the monarchy,[2] the eleven districts of the country were governed by chiefs.

Jacob settles (37 : 1, 2a)

Jacob now dwelt in the land of Canaan.

Joseph in Egypt (41 : 46); the descendants of Jacob (46 : 6-27)

(Joseph was sold into Egypt.) By the time he was thirty, he was governor over all Egypt, next to the king. Thither Jacob went down with his substance and family, seventy souls in all, including the two sons of Joseph; and each wife had twice as many descendants as her handmaid.

Sojourn in Egypt (47 : 5-11, 27, 28)

Pharaoh offered Jacob and his sons the best of the land to dwell in; and the patriarch, greeting the king, spoke with pathos of his wandering life, brief in comparison with that of his fathers. So Joseph settled his father and brethren in the country of Rameses, and they multiplied and prospered. After seventeen years, it fell to Jacob to die. So he called Joseph, and, telling of El Shaddai's promises to him at Bethel,[3] admitted Joseph's

[1] Not counting Amalek, which is represented as the son of a concubine (v. 12).

[2] Cf. 1 Chr. 1 : 51.

[3] 35 : 9-15.

two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, to the rank of his own. Jacob and Joseph's sons (48 : 3-7)

He bade his sons bury him with his fathers in the promised land, in the cave of Machpelah which was Abraham's by right of purchase, and where rested his forefathers, elect of God. So they took him to the promised land and buried him there, within that very cave. Jacob's death and burial (49 : 1, 28b-33; 50 : 12, 13)

2. *Moses* (Exodus to Deuteronomy)

(1) *The Deliverance* (Exod. 1 to 19)

In Egypt, the children of Israel, at first seventy in number, multiplied exceedingly. So the Egyptians enslaved and oppressed them, until their cry went up to God and he in pity remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them the land of Canaan. The oppression of Israel in Egypt (1 : 1-5, 7, 13, 14; 2 : 23b-25)

Faithful thereto, he revealed himself to the people, through Moses, not as of old to the patriarchs by his name El Shaddai, but by his new name Jehovah, and thereby pledged himself to deliver and redeem them, to take them for his own people, and to bring them to the promised land. But the people were too broken to listen to such a message. Disheartened by their unbelief, and conscious of his own inability as a speaker, Moses hesitated, when the divine commission was laid on him, to demand from Pharaoh the release of Israel from Egypt.[1] The new revelation of God (6 : 2-12)

[1] 6 : 13-30 is an awkward interpolation, separating question and answer. The substance of the section is: Moses and Aaron, the two brothers about to be sent to Pharaoh, were descendants of Levi, the third of Jacob's sons.

Aaron is appointed Moses's prophet (7 : 1-7)

Jehovah then charged Aaron to act as Moses's spokesman, assuring them that he would by his judgments compel the unwilling Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, and thus force the Egyptians to see what manner of god was Israel's God. Then the brothers delivered Jehovah's message to Pharaoh.

The sign of the rod (7 : 8-13)

With Pharaoh's demand for a miraculous sign to authenticate their commission, Aaron complied. But Pharaoh's magicians did the like; so, despite the higher power of Aaron—for his rod swallowed theirs—he remained unimpressed, as Jehovah had said.

Water turned into blood (7 : 19-22) [1]

A second sign, this time a plague! On Moses's word, Aaron with outstretched rod, turned the water of the land into blood. But Pharaoh's magicians did the like; so he remained unimpressed, as Jehovah had said.

The plague of frogs (8 : 5-7)

Another sign and plague! On Moses's word, Aaron with outstretched rod, brought frogs upon the land. But Pharaoh's magicians did the like; so he remained unimpressed, as Jehovah had said.

The plague of gnats (8 : 16-19)

Yet another sign and plague! On Moses's word, Aaron struck with his rod the dust of the earth, which straightway turned into gnats. This Pharaoh's magicians could not do, and they confessed it to be a thing divine, though not the work of Israel's God. So Pharaoh remained unimpressed, as Jehovah had said.

The plague of boils (9 : 8-12)

Yet another sign and plague! Moses, assisted by Aaron, sprinkling soot from the furnace toward the

[1] Only part of vv. 20 and 21 belongs to P.

heavens, caused boils to break out upon all the people, even upon the magicians. But the infatuated Pharaoh remained unimpressed, as Jehovah had said.

The institution of the passover (11 : 9 to 12 : 13)

The wonders ceased. The time for judgment had come, Jehovah resolved to smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, and to execute judgment upon Egypt's gods, but to pass over every house of Israel that bore the blood-mark. Therefore in that month of spring—with which the year was henceforth to open—by divine command the feast known as the passover was instituted.

Its participants (12 : 43-50)

Only the circumcised might partake thereof, and therefore the whole congregation of Israel ; but no foreigner or sojourner, and only such settlers among them as submitted to circumcision.

Departure from Egypt (12 : 40-42, 51)

(Jehovah smote all the first-born of Egypt.) Thus Israel, delivered, went out from Egypt after a sojourn of exactly four hundred and thirty years.

The festival of unleavened bread (12 : 14-20)

The festival of unleavened bread was ordained as a perpetual memorial of the deliverance.[1]

The consecration of the first-born (13 : 1, 2)

Fittingly, then, after the slaughter of Egypt's first-born, was Moses commissioned to consecrate to Jehovah all the first-born of Israel.[2]

The deliverance of the Red Sea (13 : 20 and 14)[3]

The Israelites were divinely led by another than the direct way, that Jehovah might show his glory upon

[1] The exodus is already an accomplished fact (cf. v. 17); hence the transposition.

[2] Cf. Num. 3 : 13 ff, 8 : 17 ff.

[3] Ch. 14 is divided about equally between P and J E.

Pharaoh, and force the Egyptians to see what manner of god was Israel's God. The infatuated king pursued and overtook them. Israel, however, in safety passed through between the walls of water that had been parted by Moses's outstretched hand; but the waters came again, and overwhelmed the host of Pharaoh—chariots and horsemen all.

Quails and manna (16)[1]

Reaching the barren wilderness of Sin in May, the despondent people murmured bitterly against Moses and Aaron. To accredit his servants and show the people his glory, Jehovah sent them quails for flesh in the evening, and in the morning heavenly bread in the form of a white seed-like thing that tasted like honey—each to gather an omer thereof; and this—which they called Man[2]—they ate for forty years till they came to the borders of Canaan.[3]

Arrival at Sinai (17 : 1a; 19 : 1, 2a)

They journeyed by stages till they came to the wilderness of Sinai (and there Jehovah gave the ten words).

[1] Most of this chapter is from P; 5 or 6 verses are from J E.

[2] = What?

[3] Whatever each one gathered, much or little, it came to an omer (17, 18). The sanctity of the Sabbath was divinely emphasized by the miraculous doubling of the *Man* that fell on the sixth day, and by its miraculous power to remain fresh (22-30). Moses instructed Aaron to set a pot of it before the ark, as a memorial for all time (32-34). (The purpose of these later sections is sufficiently obvious.)

(2) *Sinai, with the Revelation of Things Divine* (Ex. 24 : 15 to Num. 9 : 14)

Jehovah speaks to Moses (24 : 15b-18a)

After six days of preparation, Moses went up to the mount in obedience to the voice of Jehovah who spoke to him from out the fiery splendor of the cloud.

The divine origin of the tabernacle and all that pertained thereto (25 to 31)

There Jehovah bade him build for him a sanctuary, with the voluntary contributions of the people, so that he might dwell in their midst. He further gave instructions for making a tabernacle with all its furniture: an ark gorgeous with gold and guarded by cherubim to contain the tablets with the ten words, whence from time to time he would reveal his will; the costly table for the shew-bread; the golden candlestick with its seven lamps; the fourfold covering for the tabernacle of byssus curtains, goats' hair, rams' skins, and porpoise skins; the woodwork of acacia; the veil to separate the most holy place wherein was the ark of the testimony from the holy place with the table and the candlestick; the curtain for the door of the tent; the altar, with all that pertained thereto; the court round about the tabernacle; the oil for the light that should never go out; the sacred vestments for the priests; for the high-priest, the ephod with its shoulder-pieces on which were set the two stones graven with the names of the twelve tribes, to bring them to Jehovah's remembrance when the high-priest appeared before him; attached thereto, the breast-plate, set

(26)

(27)

(28)

with twelve precious stones, and furnished with the Urim and Thummim, through which were reached decisions by lot; the upper coat with its warning bells; the golden diadem engraved "Holy to Jehovah," that covered any guilt attaching to the offerings; the tunic and the turban; for the ordinary priests—tunic, girdle, head-dress; for all the priests—drawers to hide the nakedness which would incur Jehovah's deadly wrath;[1]

(29 : 1-35) the manner of consecration of the priests—how, after being washed and invested with the priestly raiment, a sin offering should be offered to cleanse altar and priests from sin, then, a burnt offering for a sweet savor to Jehovah, then an offering to consecrate them in all their faculties and in their priestly office; what portion should fall to Jehovah and to them; the transmission of the high-priest's raiment from father to son; the

(31 : 1-17) sacrificial meal;[2] the names and divine equipment of the overseers of the work of constructing the tabernacle;[3] the awful sanctity of the Sabbath as a sign[4] of the covenant.

Moses comes down from the mount (31 : 18a; 32 : 15)

Then Jehovah gave Moses the two tablets of the

[1] V. 41, which anoints all the priests, is later cf. 29 : 7.

[2] Also the atonement for the altar; the burnt offering and meal offering morning and evening, to ensure Jehovah's presence in the midst of the people (29 : 36-46); the altar of incense; the poll-tax of half a shekel for the service of the sanctuary; the laver for the priests; the holy oil to anoint the tent and its furniture, the high-priest and the other priests; the incense (30).

[3] The enumeration in vv. 7-11 is later.

[4] Like the rainbow and circumcision of the previous covenants.

testimony, and he went down from the mount with them.[1]

A month after the erection of the tabernacle, Moses, assisted by Aaron and a prince from each tribe, took, by divine command, a census of the fighting men of all the tribes, except Levi, which had charge of the tabernacle. The numbers amounted to 603,550. The first census of the men of war (Num. 1)

The encampment was arranged four-square, three tribes on each side, with Levi and the tabernacle in the middle, Judah leading the east side, Ephraim the west. The order of the camp (Num. 2)

[1] As he went a divine glory transfigured his face, and thus transfigured, he used to lay Jehovah's commands upon the affrighted people. But when this task was over he would put a vail upon his face (34 : 29-35. This section appears to be late, as it implies the tabernacle which is not yet in existence). Then Moses gathered the congregation together, and told them the words of Jehovah, beginning with the very stringent Sabbath law. All the instructions he had received from Jehovah on the mount, the people carried out to the letter; so Moses blessed them (35 to 39). By divine command, the tabernacle was set up the year after the Exodus, on New Year's Day. The cloud covered it, and the glory of Jehovah filled it. The cloud by day and the fire by night divinely guided the movements of the people (40). On the day of the erection of the tabernacle, the twelve princes made an oblation of six covered wagons, and twelve oxen, for the transport of the fabric of the tabernacle. Then on twelve successive days they offered a dedication gift, one prince each day, beginning with the prince of Judah, and all the gifts were alike—costly vessels of silver and gold for use at the altar, and animals for sacrifice (Num. 7). There is conclusive evidence, reached along several lines of argument, that all these sections which we have relegated to foot-notes are later than the context.

The Levites: their numbers and duties (3 and 4) [1]

The tribe of Levi at whose head stood Aaron the high-priest and his sons the priests, was appointed to do the work of the tabernacle, thus taking the place of Israel's first-born whom Jehovah claimed for himself when he smote the first-born of Egypt. The three clans of Levi were numbered, and their position and duties assigned—service to be rendered by all between 30 [2] and 50 years of age. The tribe numbered 22,000 [3] with 8,580 men capable of service; and the number of first-born over and above the number of Levites were redeemed with money.

The removal of the unclean (5 : 1-4)

By divine command, the children of Israel removed from the camp three classes of unclean persons.

The priestly blessing (6 : 22-27)

Thus ran the priestly blessing:

Jehovah bless thee and keep thee!

Jehovah make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee!

Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!

In the utterance of these words, Jehovah promised to impart the blessing to his people.

[1] 4 is late.

[2] See note on 1 Chr. 23 : 3.

[3] The numbers when added (vv. 22, 28, 34) give 22,300. By adding one letter to the Hebrew word for 6 in v. 28, we get the word for 3. This would keep the total right.

(3) *The Fortunes of the Way* (Num. 9 : 15 to Deut. 34 : 9)

The guiding cloud (9 : 15-23)

The people obediently ordered their march according to the will of Jehovah as expressed in the resting or the rising of the cloud that covered the tabernacle.

The departure from Sinai (10 : 1-28)

The signal for the start was a blast of the silver trumpets. In seven weeks after the erection of the tabernacle, the first start was made, under divine guidance, and in the prescribed order—Judah leading, and the Levites with the tabernacle in the middle.

The spies and their slanders: The unbelievers and their doom (13 and 14) [1]

From the wilderness south of Canaan, Moses, by divine command, sent twelve chief men, one from each tribe, including Caleb of Judah, and Hoshea or Joshua of Ephraim, to spy out the promised land. They passed through it to Rehob in the extreme north, and returned in forty days with a report which caused the congregation to murmur. "Would that we had died," they said, "in Egypt, or in this wilderness." Jehovah taking them at their word, solemnly determined that all over twenty years of age should perish in the wilderness within forty years for their sin of murmuring. The lives of the lying spies he brought to a sudden end, sparing only Joshua and Caleb who, in the face of the rebellious people, had spoken of the land as a land surpassingly good.

[1] To P belongs 13 : 1-7[a]; to J E 14 : 11-25. The rest is divided between J E and P.

Rebellion and fate of Korah (16 and 17) [1]

Korah, at the head of 250 princes, rebelled against Moses and Aaron. "The whole congregation," they urged, "is holy, and not the tribe of Levi alone." Moses invited them to submit their claims to a divine test, with the result that they were all destroyed. Only the earnest prayer of Moses and Aaron saved the rest of the congregation from their fate. Their resentment at the doom of Korah and his company vented itself on Moses and Aaron in angry murmurs, which Jehovah this time chastised with death that swept away thousands, and was only stayed by the priestly mediation of Aaron, directed by Moses. Then by the marvel wrought upon the rod of Aaron that stood for the tribe of Levi, the divine will was declared that the privilege of ministering in the sanctuary belonged to that tribe alone. This rod was to be preserved as a warning to murmurers and rebels; and the people were sore affrighted by the awful holiness of Jehovah's sanctuary.

A later account of the same incident

Korah, at the head of 250 Levites, resenting their subordinate position in the service of the sanctuary, challenged the exclusive right of the sons of Aaron to the priesthood and claimed it for the whole tribe. (But in the test, they were consumed by fire from Jehovah) and their fire-pans were beaten into plates for an altar-covering, as a sign and warning that only descendants of Aaron should exercise the priestly function before Jehovah.

The sin of Moses and Aaron (20 : 1-13) [2]

Water failed on the border of the promised land, and the people murmured bitterly against Moses and Aaron. But when Jehovah bade Moses bring water from the

[1] To P^1 belong 16 : 19-24, and 16 : 41 to 17 : 13, besides odd verses; to P^2 belong 16 : 1^a, 7^b, 8-11, 16-18, 17 : 1-5. There is also a considerable J E element in 16.

[2] JE and P blend in this section.

rock, he and his brother sinned against the holiness of Jehovah by hasty and rebellious[1] words before the people. Wherefore it was divinely ordained that they should not bring the people into the promised land.

The doom fell first upon Aaron, who, like Moses afterward, died upon a mountain-top. High-priest he was to the end, and then his raiment and office devolved upon Eleazar his son. The death of Aaron (20 : 22-29)

The people, after bewailing Aaron, journeyed on till they came to the plains of Moab, opposite Jericho. Arrival at the plains of Moab (21 : 10, 11; 22 : 1)

(By Balaam's counsel,[2] the women of Midian were set to tempt Israel into intermarriage.) Wherefore in wrath Jehovah sent a plague upon Israel which swept away thousands and was only stayed by Phinehas the high-priest's son, who in his zeal for the offended holiness of Jehovah, slew the shameless prince of Simeon with his princess paramour of Midian. Israel's fall; the zeal of Phinehas (25 : 6-9)

His zeal for the honor of Jehovah and the purity of his people received the divine reward of perpetual priesthood, to be confined to him and his descendants for ever. The reward of eternal priesthood (25 : 10-15)

Implacable enmity was enjoined against Midian for her malicious devices against Israel.[3] War with Midian enjoined (25 : 16-18)

[1] Cf. v. 24. Owing to the difficulty of the analysis in this chapter, it is hard to say wherein their sin consisted. V. 24 suggests rebellion, more mildly represented in v. 12 as lack of trust. It was hardly the smiting of the rock: otherwise what was the use of the rod?

[2] Cf. 31 : 16.

[3] Ch. 31 : The war enjoined against Midian was undertaken by 12,000 men of Israel who, without losing a man, slew every male

The second census (26)

As before at the beginning of their wanderings, so now at the end, the people by divine command were numbered according to their tribes and clans by Moses and Eleazar ; not only were there fewer now than then, but not one of those numbered then was now alive save Caleb and Joshua. Thus the divine word was fulfilled.[1] To all the tribes except Levi the land was to be apportioned by lot, the extent of the inheritance to be proportioned to the size of the tribe.

Moses to die in Moab (27 : 12-14)

Then it was divinely appointed that Moses should die like his brother upon a mountain-top ; from the Moab heights he should behold the promised land, but enter it he might not, because of his rebellious words at the waters of strife.[2]

Joshua his successor (27 : 15-23)

In answer to Moses's affectionate pleading with Jehovah for a worthy successor, his choice was divinely directed to Joshua, who should enjoy somewhat of

of Midian with her kings and Balaam, author of the malicious counsel, and took enormous spoil. Then by command of Moses, all but the virgin females were slain, as it was through the women that Israel had been tempted. To this occasion the law runs back which ordains that the spoil be equally divided between the warriors and the people who remain behind (Cf. 1 Sam. 30 : 24). Of the warriors' portion, $\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. was given to the priests, and of the people's portion, 2 per cent. to the Levites. In gratitude and to ensure Jehovah's grace, the officers dedicated to him an offering of the spoil, which was kept as a memorial in the sanctuary. (This chapter is very late. Its significance is legal; not, or only very slightly, historical. Cf. p. 161.)

[1] 14 : 29, 34. [2] Cf. Dt. 32 : 48-52.

Moses's unique dignity, and in all doubtful issues should ever consult the high-priest.

Settlements east of the Jordan (32) [1]

As the land east of the Jordan was a good land for cattle, the tribes of Reuben and Gad asked that that might be their inheritance. Moses at once indignantly challenged them *with disheartening the rest of the people by their indifference, and reminded them pointedly of the fate of the spies and of the whole generation which believed their discouraging word.*[2] On promising to aid the other tribes until they had conquered the west, Moses granted their request on condition that they kept their word.

The itinerary (33 : 1-49)

Between Rameses at the beginning of the wanderings of Israel and the plains of Moab at the end, forty stations are recorded in an ancient list that goes back to Moses.

Moses's charge (33 : 50-56): the boundaries of the land (34)

By divine command, Moses charged the children of Israel to extirpate the inhabitants of the land with every vestige of their idolatry, and then to possess the land in accordance with the divine purpose, apportioning it by lot among the tribes; its boundaries to be the wilderness on the south, the sea on the west, Hamath on the north, and on the east the lake of Gennesaret, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea. This western land was to be the territory of the nine and a half tribes, and to be apportioned by ten princes—one from each tribe, Judah first—headed by the high-priest assisted by Joshua.

To the Levites, who had no inheritance of their own,

[1] JE is also largely represented in this chapter.

[2] Vv. 7-15 are due to a very late Deuteronomic redaction.

The cities of the Levites and cities of refuge (35)

the other tribes were enjoined to assign forty-eight cities with pasture land, including six cities of refuge—three on either side of the Jordan—for innocent homicides.

Moses's final address (Deut. 1 : 3)

In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month Moses laid upon the people all that wherewith Jehovah had charged him.[1]

The death of Moses (Dt. 32 : 48-52; 34 : 1-9)[2]

Thereafter he was divinely led to Nebo on the Moab heights, there to die; and there, in view of the promised land, he died. In the leadership of the people he was succeeded by Joshua who was filled with the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands upon him.

3. *Settlement in the Land of Promise* (Joshua)

Israel in the promised land (Jos. 4 : 13, 19; 5 : 10-12)

The people crossed the Jordan and encamped in Gilgal near Jericho. Their first act in the promised land was to celebrate the passover. Then, too, they first ate of the produce of the land; so the manna ceased.

Achan's sin and fate (7)[3]

They committed treason against Jehovah in the matter of the ban; for Achan took some of that which was under ban; and all Israel stoned him with stones.

The Gibeonites (9 : 15b, 17-21)

The princes of the congregation had given a promise of safety on oath to certain cities of the Gibeonites.

[1] Deut. 1 : 3 is probably the preface to P's summary of the final words of Moses, omitted by the redactor of the Hexateuch, because superseded by our present Deuteronomy.

[2] With 32 : 48-52 cf. Num. 27 : 12-14. Of 34 : 1-9, vv. 8 and 9 with a few fragments belonging to P.

[3] One or two very brief fragments.

The people were indignant at the promise of the princes; but their solemn oath could not be broken. So the Gibeonites were spared, but reduced to the position of wood-cutters and water-carriers.

Then the whole congregation gathered together at Shiloh, and there they placed the tent of meeting, for the land had been subdued before them. The tent of meeting placed in Shiloh (18 : 1)

As the two and a half tribes had already received from Moses their inheritance, accurately delimited, east of the Jordan, the nine and a half western tribes now received their promised inheritance in the conquered land by lot from the high-priest assisted by Joshua and the princes of the tribes, at the entrance of the tent of meeting in Shiloh. The division of the land (13 : 15-33; 14 : 1-5)

The first recorded lot is that of Judah, whose boundaries and cities, including the Philistine cities on the sea-board, are most exhaustively given. Then come Manasseh and Ephraim, with meagre records, followed by Benjamin, which again is exhaustive, then by Simeon, Zebulon, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan. The boundaries and cities (15 to 19) [1]

Then, as before ordained,[2] three cities on either side of the Jordan were set apart as cities of refuge for innocent homicides,[3] and for the Levites, forty-eight The cities of refuge and cities of the Levites (20 : 1 to 21 : 42)

[1] With the exception of the passages already assigned to JE (cf. pp. 118, 119) these chapters belong entirely to P, except a verse or two which comes from the final redactor of the Hexateuch.

[2] Num. 35.

[3] Vv. 4-6, which are not in LXX, belong to a very late Deuteronomic redaction. Cf. Num. 32 : 7-15.

cities with their pasture land, including these six, drawn from the other tribes and assigned by lot to the three clans of Levites—the thirteen cities of the Levites providentially falling in what was afterward the kingdom of Judah.[1]

III

THE SOURCES, AIMS, AND IDEALS OF THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES

The date of Chronicles

The Pentateuch, in practically its present form, must have been in existence, at any rate by 330 B. C., and may have been in existence a century before that. But the priestly activity which, as we saw, contributed the latest stratum, was not exhausted by that effort. Once more the attention of that school was directed toward history,

The memorial altar (22 : 9-34)

[1] The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, before recrossing to their own territory, raised a great memorial altar on the west side of the Jordan. Regarding this seeming treason to the law of one altar as rebellion against Jehovah, the congregation sent the high-priest's son with the princes of the ten western tribes to remonstrate. The suspected tribes pledged their solemn word that the altar did not mean rebellion, nor was it designed for sacrifice, but as a witness of their kinship with Israel and their right to worship Jehovah, should the Jordan ever be regarded as a divinely constituted barrier. Their assurance satisfied both the deputies and the people at large, and confirmed in Phinehas the faith that Jehovah was among them.

both that of the monarchy and that of more recent times, and the history was rewritten from or adapted to the new point of view. Taking no account of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which really form part of the same work as Chronicles, the date of Chronicles is manifestly late. It is at least six generations after Zerubbabel[1] (520 B. C.) and cannot therefore be earlier than 350 B. C.; according to the Greek version of this passage, it would be five generations later still, and therefore at least as late as 250 B. C. It is thus, roughly speaking, seven centuries from the earliest reign which it records, and about two and a half from the latest.

The record, then, being so much later than the facts, we are entitled to ask: what were the sources accessible to the author, and what is their historic value? He seems to have had genealogies at his disposal,[2] and he very often refers to the works of prophets; but these last were probably incorporated[3] in the book which he mentions most frequently—though not always by the same name—and to which he is most deeply indebted, namely, the Book of Kings of Israel and Judah. This book was not our Book of Kings; for it contained prophetical sections[4] and statistical[5] and other[6] notices that form no part of our book. It was probably a book that traversed the history in much the same didactic spirit as Chronicles itself. Such a book

The sources

[1] 1 Chr. 3 : 19 ff. [2] 1 Chr. 5 : 17. [3] 2 Chr. 20 : 34. (R. V.)
[4] 2 Chr. 20 : 34. [5] 1 Chr. 9 : 1. [6] 2 Chr. 33 : 18.

was called a *midrash*,[1] and would undoubtedly serve the Chronicler's purpose better than history proper. A comparison of Chronicles with Samuel and Kings, however, makes it quite certain that he also had before him the histories recorded in these books in just their present form. True, the Chronicler sometimes supplements the earlier books by notices which are both interesting and probable; such as the fortifications of Rehoboam,[2] the wars and buildings of Uzziah.[3] But judging from the general nature and style, *which is his own*, of his additions to the earlier books, it is unsafe to say that he had access to written sources older than our books of Samuel and Kings.

The Chronicler's modifications of his sources

A glance at the book is sufficient to convince us that it is not written for the sake of the history it contains. It is characterized by historical improbabilities such as we have already noted in the priestly narrative in the Hexateuch (*e.g.*, Num. 31) and even in the later strata of Kings (1 K. 13). No one who reads the speech of Abijah on the eve of the battle with Jeroboam[4] could seriously maintain that it was probable; its emphasis on ritual is too elaborate and obvious (v. 11). Indeed, there are in Chronicles direct and serious contradictions of the Book of Kings. The Chronicler tells us that Jehoshaphat joined with Aha-

[1] 2 Chr. 24 : 27, cf. 13 : 22. The nature of a midrash we may see by contrasting 2 Chr. 20 with 2 K. 3.

[2] 2 Chr. 11 : 5-12. [3] 2 Chr. 26 : 6-15. [4] 2 Chr. 13 : 5-12.

ziah, and attributes to that union the wreck of his fleet;[1] according to 1 Kings 22 : 49 he refused to join him. He tells us again, that Ahaz suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of Pekah;[2] according to 2 Kings 16 : 5 (cf. Is. 7 : 1) Rezin and Pekah besieged him but could not overcome him. Sometimes the history is practically inverted, as when, in Kings,[3] Solomon gives Hiram cities in return for his loan, whereas in Chronicles[4] it is Hiram who gives Solomon the cities. The Chronicler even twice contradicts himself as well as Kings; following Kings[5] he says that the good kings Asa and Jehoshaphat did not remove the high places,[6] and yet he had just before told us that they did,[7] as, on his theory, being good kings they should. His changes, however, are never capricious. The motive is usually transparent, for example, to avoid the discrepancy occasioned by the two-fold tradition in Samuel[8] as to the defeat of Goliath, he represents Elhanan as slaying *the brother of* Goliath.[9] His motive is, however, more often theological. David's impulse to number the people, which in 2 Samuel 24 : 1 came from Jehovah, comes from Satan in 1 Chronicles 21 : 1.

The Chronicler's view of the past

In particular, he is influenced by the desire to glorify the past and to find in antiquity the fully developed insti-

[1] 2 Chr. 20 : 35. [2] 2 Chr. 28 : 5-8.
[3] 1 K. 9 : 11-14. [4] 2 Chr. 8 : 2.
[5] 1 K. 15 : 14; 22 : 43. [6] 2 Chr. 15 : 17; 20 : 33.
[7] 2 Chr. 14 : 5; 17 : 6. [8] 1 S. 17 : 51, 2 S. 21 : 19. [9] 1 Chr. 20 : 5.

tutions of his own time which, in point of fact, took centuries to develop. David appears as the founder of sacred music, and of a most elaborate temple ritual and organization. The terror of his name is over all the earth.[1] Solomon's glory still flashes brilliantly across the intervening centuries. "Jehovah magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty *as had not been on any king before him in Israel.*"[2] This last sentence finely illustrates the somewhat mechanical and unimaginative spirit with which the Chronicler approaches the treatment of history. Numbers and successes are exaggerated. Hundreds become thousands.[3] Half a million Israelites perish in a day.[4] Jehoshaphat, who confesses that he has no might,[5] has yet nearly a million and a quarter fighting men.[6]

Omissions

The omissions are just as significant as the transformations. There is no reference, for example, to David's encounter with Ishbibenob, in which he was delivered by the timely arrival of Abishai;[7] no mention of the brazen serpent which was in the temple as late as Hezekiah's time,[8] nor of Hezekiah's tribute of silver and gold to the king of Assyria,[9] nor of the idolatrous and immoral wor-

[1] 1 Chr. 14 : 17. [2] 1 Chr. 29 : 25.

[3] 1 Chr. 19 : 18, cf. 2 Sam. 10 : 18. 1 Chr. 18 : 4, cf. 2 Sam. 8 : 4. In both cases 700 becomes 7,000. In 2 Chr. 4 : 5, the 2,000 of 1 K. 7 : 26 has become 3,000.

[4] 2 Chr. 13 : 17. [5] 2 Chr. 20 : 12. [6] 2 Chr. 17 : 14-19.

[7] 2 Sam. 21 : 15-17. [8] 2 K. 18 : 4. [9] 2 K. 18 : 14-16.

ship that flourished under Rehoboam.[1] The temper indicated by these omissions is still more conspicuous in the longer omissions. Nothing is given of Saul's reign but the close,[2] and even there his doom is explained in a way[3] not strictly consistent with the original passage in 1 Samuel 28 : 6. The story of David's sin against Uriah is omitted, as well as the story of Amnon, with Absalom's flight, recall, and rebellion, the intrigues which secured the throne for Solomon, his foreign marriages and idolatries. The most striking omission, however, is the absence of all but the barest references to the northern kingdom, those only being retained which relate in some way to the southern kingdom.

The key to the book: the pre-eminence of Judah

This is the key to the book. Nothing is of real interest but Judah; and in Judah, Jerusalem; and in Jerusalem, the temple. For the Chronicler, the temple with its worship is the centre of the universe. "Jehovah is not with Israel"[4] sounds the watchword of the book, which exalts the religious uniqueness of Judah. For example, while many of the northern tribes laughed to scorn Hezekiah's messengers when invited to celebrate a great passover feast at Jerusalem, Judah accepted the invitation unanimously.[5] This explains why in 1 Chronicles 2 to 8 the genealogies of Judah are given first place and disproportionate space, occupying 102 verses. Characteris-

[1] 1 K. 14 : 22-24. [2] 1 Chr. 10. [3] 1 Chr. 10 : 14.
[4] 2 Chr. 25 : 7. [5] 2 Chr. 30 : 10-12.

tically, too, Benjamin, whose lot was associated with Judah's, receives at least 40 verses, and Levi 81, while all the others put together have only 86. So completely has the northern kingdom vanished from the thought of the Chronicler that its name is occasionally applied to Judah when the writer is thinking of the people as in covenant relation to God, so that the "princes of Judah" in one verse can be called the princes of Israel in the next,[1] and a king of Judah may be called a king of Israel.[2] Naturally Judah is tenderly dealt with. The threat of the prophets contemporary with Manasseh, of the terrible doom to fall on Judah and Jerusalem, is omitted.[3] Worship on the high places, a practice which the Book of Kings admits and deplores, is often quietly passed over,[4] nor are there many traces left of the immorality of the worship which Kings represents as being tolerated by some rulers,[5] and attacked by others.[6] When a fact that makes against Judah is recognized, it usually receives a kindly turn at the hand of the Chronicler. The notice in 1 Kings 22 : 43 that in Jehoshaphat's time "the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places," becomes in 2 Chronicles 20 : 33 "neither as yet had the people set their hearts unto the God of their fathers."

[1] 2 Chr. 12 : 5, 6. [2] 2 Chr. 21 : 2, Jehoshaphat; 2 Chr. 28 : 19, Ahaz.
[3] 2 K. 21 : 11-16.
[4] 2 K. 14 : 4, Amaziah; 15 : 4, Uzziah; 15 : 35, Jotham.
[5] 1 K. 14 : 22-24, Rehoboam.
[6] 1 K. 15 : 12, Asa; 22 : 46, Jehoshaphat.

Interest, then, is monopolized by Judah, and it has, for its centre, the temple, with its ritual, its priests, its Levites, its singers. In this the book is but a faithful reflex of the post-exilic age in which it was composed. For the body-guard which assisted in the revolution of Jehoiada, the Chronicler substitutes the Levites,[1] as he does for the prophets mentioned in connection with Josiah's reformation.[2] How prominent ritual interests were in his mind may be strikingly seen in his treatment of Hezekiah's reign as compared with the account in the Book of Kings. In the latter book, there is historical interest of the most thrilling kind—the Assyrian embassy to Hezekiah, the threatened attack on Jerusalem, the strange deliverance, and behind all the great figure of Isaiah. The Chronicler, though he does not ignore this story, devotes by far the largest share of his attention to the great passover held in Hezekiah's reign. Similarly the brief statement of Josiah's passover in the Book of Kings[3] is expanded by the Chronicler into 19 verses.[4] The mention of the temple, although it occurs in a message to a foreigner, leads to an elaborate notice of the various services, for which the Book of Kings supplies no warrant.[5] David is interested in the minutest detail of the organization of the yet unbuilt temple. Uzziah's leprosy, of which 2 Kings 15 : 5 only states the fact, is interpreted by the Chronicler as

The prominence of ritual interests

[1] 2 Chr. 23.
[2] 2 K. 23 : 2; 2 Chr. 34 : 30.
[3] 2 Chr. 23 : 21-23.
[4] 2 Chr. 35 : 1-19.
[5] Chr. 2 : 4, 1 K. 5 : 5.

punishment for encroaching on priestly prerogatives.[1] In a battle, the priests with their trumpets are almost as necessary an adjunct as God himself.[2]

Levitical interests

Especially keen is the interest displayed by the author in the Levites, so that it has been plausibly suggested that he was himself a Levite. It is a Levite who is moved by the Spirit to speak a heartening word to Jehoshaphat before the battle.[3] At the reformation of Josiah, it is distinctly said that the Levites were more enthusiastic than the priests.[4] Coupled with this is the Chronicler's exceptional interest in the musical service. In his account of the inauguration of the temple, and of the passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah,[5] the music receives special attention.

The prophets in Chronicles

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the Chronicler cares for nothing but priests and ritual. He also cares, after his own fashion, for prophets and morality. In fact, the Book of Chronicles is richer in prophetic scenes than the Book of Kings. The function of the prophet is here as elsewhere to reprove apostasy,[6] and to bring men back to God.[7] The threat of a prophet will find its grim fulfilment [8] unless averted by humility and repentance.[9] Even kings have to listen humbly to the prophet's word.[10] In one passage, belief in the prophet is

[1] 2 Chr. 26 : 16-20. [2] 2 Chr. 13 : 12. [3] 2 Chr. 20 : 14.
[4] 2 Chr. 29 : 34. [5] 2 Chr. 5 : 11-13; 29 : 25, 26; 35 : 15.
[6] 2 Chr. 25 : 15. [7] 2 Chr. 24 : 19. [8] 2 Chr. 36 : 21.
[9] 2 Chr. 12 : 6, 7. [10] 2 Chr. 36 : 12.

almost made co-ordinate with faith in Jehovah himself.[1] Such is the Chronicler's theory of the prophet's place and function, and the theory is supported by his illustrations. Shemaiah, for instance, explains to Rehoboam that the invasion of Shishak is the divine retribution upon his forgetfulness of Jehovah.[2] Hanani reproves Asa for putting his trust in a human king,[3] just as Jehu reproves Jehoshaphat for assisting the wicked Ahab,[4] and Eliezer warns him of the consequences of his league with Ahaziah.[5] Over the army of Israel, intoxicated by its defeat of Judah, Oded hangs his threat and reproof,[6] while Azariah encourages Asa, and gives the impetus to his reformation.[7]

Their significance

On the pages of the Chronicler, the prophet seems to hold a place second only to that of the priest. Yet a closer examination compels us to doubt whether he had any profound interest in or knowledge of the prophets. Hardly any of the allusions to the prophets or their speeches is supported by the testimony of the Book of Kings ; and some of the prophetic appearances mentioned above occur in connection with incidents which, as we have seen, are even contradicted by that book, such as the league of Jehoshaphat with Ahaziah, and the defeat of Ahaz by Pekah. It would be strange that one who really

[1] 2 Chr. 20 : 20. [2] 2 Chr. 12 : 5. [3] 2 Chr. 16 : 7-10.
[4] 2 Chr. 19 : 2, 3. [5] 2 Chr. 20 : 37.
[6] 2 Chr. 28 : 9 ff. [7] 2 Chr. 15 : 2 ff.

cared for prophets should all but ignore the giant figure of Elijah, as the Chronicler does. That cannot be only because he is a prophet of the northern kingdom, for he does mention him—strangely enough, as *writing*;[1] and this, the only mention of him, involves a historical impossibility.[2] In the days of the Chronicler, the prophet was no more a living reality: but it was impossible to forget the place he had once filled, and the duties he had striven, too often unsuccessfully, to do. It is in that capacity then that he appears before us in the Book of Chronicles, as pointing out the moral of a situation in the way above described, now by stimulus, now again by rebuke. He fulfils much the same function in the Book of Chronicles as the Deuteronomic redactor in the earlier historical books. Each appears at salient points in the history in the spirit of the moralist or the preacher rather than of the objective historian, and elicits from the situation the truth it is fitted to teach.

The religious value of Chronicles

As the Chronicler's additions, omissions, and transformations show that he does not claim to be a historian in the ordinary sense of the word, it is all the more incumbent upon us to find where his interests and passions really lie. Apart from the obvious sacerdotalism, which meant so much to him, it is in great part to the prophetic scenes that we must go to learn how deeply he cared for

[1] 2 Chr. 21 : 12.

[2] "He had quitted this earth long before." Cf. 2 K. 3 : 11; 8 : 16.

God, how highly he valued fidelity to him, and how firmly he believed in the moral government of the world. These thoughts lie behind their sometimes strange historic setting; they lie deep in the heart of the Chronicler, and it is his thought and moral convictions rather than his history that are the things of value to us. The older the Hebrew nation grew, the more fantastic became its imagination, and the deeper its disregard of fact as fact; but it always firmly held the deep, great, and fundamental things that lie behind all fact.

Intense belief in a moral order

If we note the teaching of the book more closely in this light, what at first seems a mechanical reading of an event will on second thought appear as testimony to a profound and intense belief in a moral order. Amaziah's fatuous challenge of Joash with the defeat which it involved, is regarded as the divine punishment of his idolatry in seeking after the gods of Edom.[1] To a similar reason is traced the defeat of Ahaz, at the hands of Aram, Israel, Edom, and Philistia,[2] and also the defeat of Joash by Aram.[3] Similarly Jotham becomes mighty because he ordered his ways before Jehovah, his God,[4] and Manasseh's repentance delivers him from exile as surely as his sin had carried him thither.[5] All this teaching implies a moral and religious interpretation of fact, altogether independent of the historicity of these particular facts. The

[1] 2 Chr. 25 : 20. [2] 2 Chr. 28 : 5, 19. [3] 2 Chr. 24 : 24.
[4] 2 Chr. 27 : 6. [5] 2 Chr. 33 : 11-13.

theory would not be invalidated if any or all of these incidents were disproved. For the theory represents a moral reality resting partly it may be on intuition, yet also partly on observation and experience if not of these facts then of others.

God the great reality

Instead of quarrelling then with the Chronicler for his history—the value of which as history, God, by preserving for us the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures, has himself given us the means of determining—we should rather learn of him his deep faith in the moral significance of history. The strength of his conception is indeed not so obvious as its weakness, but it is as real. When he tells us that Hezekiah prospered because of his zeal for religion,[1] it is easy to say that his religion was largely a matter of ritual,[2] and that his prosperity is externally conceived. But deeper than that is the great faith that God's hand is in human affairs, filling them full of moral meaning. If God is transcendent,[3] he is also immanent. The tremendous reality that God should be in life is suggested by Asa's terrible decree, which condemned to death all who refused to seek Jehovah, whether small or great, man or woman.[4] Is it unnatural that so great a reality should make himself felt—that if, and so long as,[5] men seek him, he will be found of them, but if they forsake him, he will forsake them[6]—in ways that the dullest will feel? How

[1] 2 Chr. 31 : 21. [2] Cf. 2 Chr. 13 : 11. [3] Gen. 1.
[4] 2 Chr. 15 : 13. [5] 2 Chr. 26 : 5. [6] 2 Chr. 15 : 2.

externally the divine interposition is sometimes conceived may be seen by a study of some of the battle-scenes scattered throughout the book. The figure of the warrior is even less clear to the Chronicler than that of the prophet. There is an almost Miltonic unreality about the battles; or rather, we might say, there are no battles. The human warriors hardly count at all. They have but to shout;[1] and if the cause is just—which usually and not altogether without historical justification means, if the cause is Judah's—the victory is theirs. This may seem mechanical; but it is the Chronicler's embodiment of the great truth that God is the arbiter of war, and that battles and victories and defeats do not mean nothing. Numbers cannot overwhelm the cause that is God's, for he is omnipotent.[2] Success in battle, as in life, comes from "leaning on Jehovah, the God of the fathers;"[3] both faith and "work shall be rewarded."[4]

To the Chronicler, then, no less than to the prophet, it is God who is the great reality of life. All human activity is under his direction. Judges administer justice, not for man but for him.[5] The inspiration to all work is faith in him. Reliance on man is a no less than tragic mistake. Even the good Asa twice erred in this way. Once in straits he relied upon the king of Aram,[6] and once again on the physicians;[7] both times comes the reminder that

[1] 2 Chr. 13 : 15. [2] 2 Chr. 14 : 11. [3] 2 Chr. 13 : 18; 26 : 5.
[4] 2 Chr. 15 : 7. [5] 2 Chr. 19 : 6. [6] 2 Chr. 16 : 7. [7] 1 Chr. 16 : 12.

the source of all help is God. But the God in whom so absolute a confidence is demanded is worthy of it, for he is omnipotent. He can be appealed to in the most desperate straits; legions cannot prevail against him.[1] It is he who determines alike the wars of neighboring tribes[2] and the great movements of history.[3] He has power to help and to cast down. He can compensate men for losses that befall them in the path of obedience to his word,[4] and he shows himself strong in behalf of those whose heart is perfect toward him.[5] But, besides being omnipotent, he is omniscient. His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth.[6] He searcheth all hearts and understandeth the imaginations of the thoughts.[7] He is no respecter of persons. Men receive at his hands their just deserts,[8] so that the good can count upon his presence,[9] and not the good only, but the penitent;[10] "for he is gracious and merciful and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him."[11] In a word, he is "Jehovah the good,"[12] who is ready to pardon all who earnestly seek him, though their approach to him be not ritually correct.[13] His spirit is unlimited and impartial in its operations. It can reveal to David the pattern of the

[1] 2 Chr. 14 : 11. [2] 1 Chr. 5 : 22.
[3] 1 Chr. 5 : 26. [4] 2 Chr. 25 : 8, 9.
[5] 2 Chr. 16 : 9. [6] 2 Chr. 16 : 9.
[7] 1 Chr. 28 : 9. [8] 2 Chr. 15 : 2.
[9] 2 Chr. 19 : 11. [10] 2 Chr. 15 : 4.
[11] 2 Chr. 30 : 9. [12] 2 Chr. 30 : 18. [13] 2 Chr. 30 : 19.

temple,[1] and it can inspire the warrior[2] no less than the prophet.[3]

With such a God to worship, it would be impossible that the interests of the Chronicler should be wholly bound by ritual. He, too, has caught something of the divine large-heartedness. He has the daring to invest the king of Egypt with an almost prophetic dignity, in making him the bearer of a divine message to Josiah.[4] Supremely instructive is his account of Hezekiah's reformation, where thorough ritualist as he was, he yet clearly subordinated form to the spirit. The passover then held was full of irregularities. It was held in another month than that prescribed by law, and was attended by multitudes who were unclean. Yet, with a nobleness worthy of the God whom he worshipped, he puts into the lips of Hezekiah the following beautiful prayer: "May Jehovah the good pardon every one that setteth his heart to seek God, even Jehovah, the God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary."

[1] 1 Chr. 28 : 12, cf. 19.
[2] 1 Chr. 12 : 18.
[3] 2 Chr. 15 : 1.
[4] 2 Chr. 30 : 18, 19.

In the following pages **bold face type** represents the work of the priestly historians.

Passages quoted by the Chronicler from the Books of Samuel and Kings are not paraphrased, but are alluded to by title, and printed, like all original historical sources, in plain type.

Contradictions in the Books of Chronicles to the original notices in Samuel or Kings are indicated by UPRIGHT CAPITALS, and important modifications of these notices by *SLOPING CAPITALS.*

IV

THE HISTORY OF JUDAH TO THE CAPTIVITY
(1 and 2 Chronicles)

1. *Preparation for the History of the Kingdom of Judah*
(1 Chr. 1 to 10)

The choice of Israel by God (1)

Mankind is ultimately one; but Israel is the people elect. For, of the three great families of men, the Semites were chosen above the others; and of the sons of Abraham the Semite, Isaac was chosen above the others; and of Isaac's sons, Israel was chosen above Esau.

The tribe of Judah (2)

Of Israel's sons, Judah was chosen above the others, for he was the ancestor of David. To this tribe belong also Caleb and Jerahmeel, whose descendants shared Judah's territory and fortunes.

The line of David (3)

The throne of Judah was occupied by an unbroken line of David's descendants for over four hundred years —till the exile; and the line, including Zerubbabel, who was prince of Judah under Persia, in 520 B. C., has continued to this day.[1]

Notices of Judah (4 : 1-23), Simeon (4 : 24-43), Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh (5)

The genealogies[2] of the families of Judah are taken from ancient records. Then follow the genealogies of the prosperous and energetic Simeon, of Reuben, and of Gad. The last two tribes, with the half tribe of

[1] Six generations afterward, in the Hebrew text; eleven, in LXX.

[2] Mainly topographical.

Manasseh, forgetting the God who had given them their territory by defeating their enemies in battle, and turning to the worship of other gods, were carried away into captivity by the Assyrian king[1] in execution of Jehovah's purpose.

The tribe of Levi (6 : 1-53)

Of great importance[2] is the tribe of Levi, with its line of high-priests running from Aaron to the time of the exile, and its three guilds of singers established by David, connected with the three Levitical families.

Levitical cities (6 : 54-81)

The three clans of Levites lived in forty-eight cities drawn from the other tribes, and assigned by lot, of which thirteen cities fell to the priests in what was afterwards the kingdom of Judah.

Issachar, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher (7), Benjamin (8)

After the genealogies of Issachar, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher, comes that of Benjamin, the tribe of Saul whose family was still represented even in the post-exilic community.[3]

Chief families of Jerusalem after the restoration (9 : 1-34)

After the restoration that followed the return from exile, Jerusalem, the capital, was the residence of the chiefs of certain clans, also of certain priests and Levites. There dwelt gatekeepers for the temple, who were assisted every week in rotation by brethren from the villages. Singers also dwelt there, and others

[1] Neither in 2 K. 15 : 29 in the deportation of 734 B. C., nor in 2 K. 17 : 6 in that which followed the capture of Samaria in 721 B. C., do these tribes receive special mention.

[2] Two of the lists are twice repeated: 16-30, 31-48 and 4-8, 49-53.

[3] 8 : 29-38 repeated in 9 : 35-44.

who had the supervision of the tabernacle furniture or service.

The death of Saul . . . . . (1 S. 31) (10 : 1-12)

Saul died because of his disobedience to the divine word, and because he consulted one that had a familiar spirit, and did NOT inquire of Jehovah. The reason for Saul's sad fate (10 : 13, 14)

2. *The History of the Kingdom of Judah* (1 Chr. 11 to 2 Chr. 36)

(1) *David* (1 Chr. 11 to 29)

David is anointed King over Israel: he seizes Jerusalem . . . . . (2 S. 5 : 1-3, 6-10) (11 : 1-9)

David's mighty men . . . (2 S. 23 : 1-39) (11 : 10-41a)[1]

During his outlawry, David was joined both in south and north by a brave and ever-increasing band—including even men of Saul's own tribe—till it grew to be a great host like the host of God. Warriors who joined David (12 : 1-22)

Great numbers of armed men from all the tribes, beginning with Judah, came to Hebron to turn the kingdom of Saul to David, according to the word of Jehovah. Warriors and people alike were unanimous to make him king. Warriors who helped to make him king (12 : 23-40)

He received the assent of the congregation to his proposal to gather their brethren throughout Israel together with the priests and the Levites for the purpose of bringing up the ark of God to Jerusalem; and David's proposal to remove the ark (13 : 1-5)

[1] 11 : 41b-47 supplements the list in 2 S. by several names.

he gathered all Israel together from the utmost limit of the land.

(13 : 6-14) The ark is brought to the house of Obed-edom . . . . . (2 S. 6 : 2-11)

(14 : 1, 2) Hiram assists David . . . (2 S. 5 : 11, 12)

(14 : 3-7) David's sons . . . . . (2 S. 5 : 13-16)

(14 : 8-16) The Philistine defeat . . . (2 S. 5 : 17-25)

(14 : 12) **David commanded that** the gods abandoned by the Philistines *BE BURNED WITH FIRE* . (2 S. 5 : 21)

The fame of David (14 : 17) **His fame was world wide, and a divine terror of him lay upon all the nations.**

The preparations for the removal of the ark from the house of Obed-edom (15 : 1-24) **David gathered together the priests and the Levites to bring up the ark after duly sanctifying themselves; and, in strict accordance with the Mosaic law, he provided that the ark be borne by the Levites. At his suggestion, too, the Levites instituted a musical service which was in charge of Heman, Asaph, and Ethan.**

(15 : 25 to 16 : 3) The ark is brought to Zion . . (2 S. 6 : 12b-19a)

The musical service (16 : 4-36) **After arranging for the service of the ark, David ordained that thanks be offered by Asaph and his brethren, and three thanksgiving psalms were sung in whole or in part.**[1]

Provision for the daily service (16 : 37-43) **Then he established for all time the service of sacrifice and song, the former in conformity with the Mosaic law.**

(17) David is refused permission to build the temple, but is promised an everlasting kingdom (2 S. 7).

[1] These were the 105th, the 96th, and the 106th.

David's wars and court . . . . (2 S. 8) (18)

David's acquisitions of bronze were devoted by Solomon to the temple vessels.[1] (18 : 8)

The sons of David were *CHIEF ABOUT THE KING* . . . . . (2 S. 8 : 18) (18 : 17)

The war with Ammon . . . (2 S. 10 : 1 to 11 : 1) (19 : 1 to 20 : 1)

The defeat of Ammon . . . (2 S. 12 : 30, 31) (20 : 2, 3)

The exploits of David's heroes . (2 S. 21 : 18-22) (20 : 4-8)

Elhanan slew THE BROTHER OF Goliath (2 S. 21 : 19) (20 : 5)

David's census and its results . . . (2 S. 24) (21)

SATAN moved David to number Israel . (2 S. 24 : 1) (21 : 1)

David saw the angel of Jehovah standing between earth and heaven with a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. (21 : 16)

He paid Ornan *SIX HUNDRED SHEKELS OF GOLD* . . . . . (2 S. 24 : 24) (21 : 25)

Jehovah answered David's offering by fire from heaven; so he sacrificed there. For fear of the angel's drawn sword had kept him from going to the high place of Gibeon, where was the tabernacle of Jehovah that Moses had made. (21 : 26 to 22 : 1)

David's preparations for the temple, and his charge to Solomon (22)

On a magnificent scale David amassed material for the building of the temple—metal and wood and money in abundance, a hundred thousand talents of gold and a million of silver; for the fame of the temple must reach to the ends of the earth. With its erection he charged his son Solomon, born as he was to be a man of peace,

[1] Suggested perhaps by 2 Sam. 8 : 11.

with the prayer that he might have wisdom given him to keep the ancient law of Moses; and he bade the princes help him.

The organization of the Levites (23)

To the Levites over thirty [1] years of age, whom the census showed to number thirty-eight thousand, various duties were assigned—the administration of justice,[2] the keeping of the gates, the conduct of the service of praise, but chiefly that of waiting on the priests. The courses were divided among the three clans of Levi.[3]

The priests (24)

Further, David divided the priests into twenty-four courses.

The singers (25)

He also entrusted the musical service to twenty-four courses of singers of the families of Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman—each course consisting of twelve Levites who were all instructed in sacred song, and could play skilfully on instruments of music.

Levitical officers (26)

Levites were also appointed to keep the gates on every side, to superintend the temple treasuries, and to engage in outside service such as the administration of justice.

Army and other officials (27)

The army was organized in twelve divisions, each division consisting of twenty-four thousand men, under a captain of its own. Over each tribe [4] was a prince,

[1] So v. 3, cf. Num. 4 : 35. The age is modified to 25 in Num. 8 : 23-26, and still further to 20 in v. 24 of this chapter (1 Chr. 23).

[2] Cf. 2 Chr. 19 : 8.

[3] The families composing the clans are recorded in 6-23, the list of the Kohathites and Merarites being repeated with some additions in 24 : 20-31.

[4] Gad and Asher are omitted.

and besides other officials, twelve officers were in charge of David's personal property in city and country.

David's charge to Solomon and the people (28)

David, having summoned all the civil and military dignitaries of the kingdom to Jerusalem, and reminded them how God had chosen himself and Solomon and the tribe of Judah, solemnly charged them to keep his commandments and bade Solomon address himself with sincerity, faith, and courage to the task to which God had called him, even the building of the temple. He gave Solomon a plan of the temple with all its furniture and sundry other details, the pattern of which he had himself received from the hand of God ; and he strengthened him with the assurance of all help, human and divine.

The offerings (29 : 1-9)

In addition to the abundant and costly material David had already amassed for the temple, he announced, before the whole congregation, a magnificent gift of gold and silver out of his own private fortune. Then he made the appeal, "Who offereth willingly to consecrate himself this day?"—an appeal which met with a response no less hearty than splendid.

David's prayer (29 : 10-19)

David then offered a prayer of thanksgiving to Jehovah on this wise: "Thou art the great and glorious lord of all, and who are we to offer gifts to thee? We are but strangers and sojourners. Our gifts are but thine own given back to thee. Searcher of hearts! in all sincerity we offer these our gifts. God of our fathers, evermore grant to thy people and to my son a heart that is fixed on thee."

The sacrifices (29 : 20-22a) **The people responded and bowed in worship. On the next day they offered sacrifices unstinted in number, and ate and drank before their God with great gladness.**

The accession of Solomon (29 : 22b-25) **Solomon was anointed king, receiving the submission of the princes and the obedience of the people, and Jehovah bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.**

The sources of David's biography (29 : 26-30) **The history of David is written in the books of Samuel, Nathan, and Gad.**

(2) *Solomon* (2 Chr. 1 to 9)

(1) Solomon's dream at Gibeon . . (1 K. 3 : 4-15)

(1 : 3-5) Solomon **and all the congregation with him** went to the high place that was at Gibeon. *FOR, THOUGH THE ARK HAD BEEN TAKEN TO JERUSALEM BY DAVID, THE TENT OF MEETING WHICH MOSES HAD MADE, AND THE ANCIENT ALTAR OF BRONZE WERE IN GIBEON* . . . . . (1 K. 3 : 4)

(1 : 15) **Solomon made gold to be as stones in Jerusalem.**

(2 : 1, 2, 18) Preparations for the building of the temple (1 K. 5 : 5, 15, 16)

(2 : 4) **Solomon informs Hiram that the object of the temple to be built is to burn incense before Jehovah, and to offer the continual shew bread, and the burnt offerings morning and evening on the Sabbaths, new moons, and set feasts of Jehovah.**

(2 : 3-16) His negotiations with Hiram . . (1 K. 5 : 2-11)

For the building of the temple Solomon raised a levy (2 : 17)
of the *STRANGERS*[1] in Israel, and they numbered
153,600 men . . . . . (1 K. 5 : 13)

The temple and its vessels . . (1 K. 6 and 7) (3 and 4)

The temple was built on Mount Moriah, where Je- (3 : 1)
hovah had appeared to David in the threshing floor of
Ornan.[2]

Gold was used in profusion. (3 : 5-9)

A *VEIL* separated the holy place from the most (3 : 14)
holy[3] . . . . . (1 K. 6 : 31, 32)

Solomon made an altar of bronze.[4] (4 : 1)

He made ten tables and a hundred basins of gold, (4 : 8, 9)
TWO courts,[5] and brass covered doors for the outer
doorway.

The ark brought into the temple . . (1 K. 8 : 1-11) (5)

The *LEVITES* took up the ark . . (1 K. 8 : 3) (5 : 4)

While the music and song of thanksgiving were be- (5 : 11b-13a)
ing raised by the Levites, the temple was filled with a
cloud.

The dedication and prayer[6] . . (1 K. 8 : 12-50) (6 : 1-42)

Solomon offered his dedicatory prayer from a small (6 : 13)
platform which he had erected in the midst of the
court.

1 This view finds expression in the later stratum of Kings (1 K. 9 : 22).
2 1 Chr. 21 : 18 ff.
3 In Kings, *doors* of olive wood.
4 Not mentioned in 1 K. 7, but implied in 2 K. 16 : 14 and elsewhere.
5 So in the second temple, but not in Solomon's; cf. note on 2 K. 21 : 5.
6 The prayer concludes (6 : 41, 42) with a quotation from Psalm 132 : 9, 10.

(7 : 4, 5, 7-10) Conclusion of the dedication ceremonies (1 K. 8 : 62-66)

(7 : 1-3) **When Solomon ceased praying, fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifice, and the glory of Jehovah filled the house, so that the priests could not enter in; and the people saw, and bowed in worship, and gave thanks.**

(7 : 6) **The people stood, while the Levites sounded their instruments of music, and the priests their trumpets.**

(7 : 10) Solomon dismissed the people on the *NINTH*[1] day (1 K. 8 : 66)

(7 : 11-22) Jehovah acknowledges Solomon's sacrifice; he promises and warns . . . . . (1 K. 9 : 1-9)

(8) Solomon's fortifications and trade . (1 K. 9 : 10-28)

(8 : 2) **Solomon fortified the cities which *HIRAM HAD GIVEN HIM* and caused the children of Israel to dwell in them.**

(8 : 3-5) **He seized Hamath, fortified Tadmor,[2] the two Beth-horons and certain store cities in Hamath.**

(8 : 11) Solomon brought up Pharaoh's daughter out of the city of David into the house that he had built for her: *FOR HE SAID "MY WIFE*[3] *SHALL NOT DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF DAVID, BECAUSE THE PLACES ARE HOLY WHEREUNTO THE ARK OF JEHOVAH HATH COME"* . . . . . (1 K. 3 : 1; 9 : 24[a])

Solomon regulated his burnt offerings by the law of

[1] 23d day of the month: cf. Num. 29 : 12-40.
[2] Possibly a slip for Tamar (a fortress in Judah?)
[3] Or "No woman shall dwell, etc."

Moses, and in accordance with David's instructions, he appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites to their several duties. [1] Solomon's temple organization (8 : 12-16)

The visit of the Queen of Sheba. Solomon's splendor. (9)

The records of his reign . (1 K. 10 : 1-29; 11 : 41-43)

Solomon's throne had a footstool of gold. (9 : 18)

(3) *From the Disruption to the Captivity* (2 Chr. 10 to 36)

(a) *The Division of the Kingdom* (2 Chr. 10 : 1 to 11 : 4)

The division of the Kingdom . . (1 K. 12 : 1-19) (10)

The intervention of the prophet Shemaiah (11 : 1-4)
(1 K. 12 : 21-24)

(b) *Rehoboam* (2 Chr. 11 : 5 to 12 : 16)

Rehoboam fortified fifteen cities in Judah and Benjamin, the two tribes whose allegiance he retained. [2] Rehoboam's fortifications (11 : 5-12)

The faithful priests and Levites, driven out of the northern Kingdom by Jeroboam, who put in their places the idolatrous priests of the calf worship, resorted, with all the faithful, to Judah and Jerusalem, where, under Rehoboam's patronage, they for a time strengthened both him and his kingdom. Rehoboam welcomes the faithful priests and Levites (11 : 13-17)

He had many wives and concubines, and he distrib-

[1] Compare the statement in the later stratum of Kings (1 K. 9 : 25).

[2] The loyalty of Benjamin seems also to be implied by 14 : 8; 15 : 2, 8, 9. But considering that this was Saul's tribe, it is very improbable, and is contradicted by 1 K. 12 : 20. "Secured" would be a possible rendering of the Hebrew.

His apostasy (11 : 18 to 12 : 1)

uted his numerous children throughout the fortified cities. When his kingdom was established, he forsook the law of Jehovah and all Israel with him.

The invasion of Shishak, Shemaiah's reproof; the popular penitence (12 : 2-8)

So for their sin Shishak, king of Egypt, came with countless hosts, and after seizing the fortified cities reached Jerusalem. Then a prophet announced to the assembled court that this invasion was the divine punishment for sin. On their humble confession, however, he promised that the wrath of Jehovah would not be poured out upon Jerusalem, though they would indeed be Shishak's servants.

(12 : 9-11, 13) Shishak carries off the treasures of temple and palace (1 K. 14 : 25-28, 31)

(12 : 12, 14) The wrath of Jehovah was turned from the king, when he humbled himself. He did that which was evil, because he set not his heart to seek Jehovah.[1]

(c) *Abijah* (2 Chr. 13)

Abijah's speech (13 : 3-12)

Abijah of Judah with four hundred thousand men and Jeroboam of Israel with an army twice as large, met to do battle. Abijah addressed Jeroboam and his army, reminding them that the kingdom of Israel belonged to David and his descendants by divine right. Jeroboam was an unworthy rebel. They need not think to win the day, despite the great multitude and the golden calves, for they had cast out the priests and Levites and abandoned the true worship for idolatry. But Judah had been faithful; with her were priests and

[1] For 12 : 15, 16, cf. 1 K. 14 : 30, 31.

Levites who had with unfailing scrupulousness performed all the duties appertaining to the house of God. "God is at our head," he concluded: "his priests will sound an alarm against you. Fight not a vain fight against the God of your fathers."

His victory over Jeroboam (13 : 13-22)

To this speech Jeroboam replied by setting an ambush for the men of Judah. When they saw how they were surrounded, they sent up a shout to Jehovah, and the priests sounded the trumpets. In answer, God smote Israel, so that half a million were slain. Thus the men of Judah prevailed, because they leaned upon Jehovah, God of their fathers.

(d) *Asa* (2 Chr. 14 to 16)

Asa's religious reforms . . (1 K. 15 : 8-12) (14 : 1-5)

Asa commanded Judah to seek Jehovah and to do (14 : 4, 5)
the law and the commandments. He *ALSO REMOVED*
THE HIGH PLACES[1] . . . . (1 K. 15 : 14)

Asa's fortifications and army (14 : 6-8)

He profited by the ten years of rest to fortify certain cities in Judah; and his army, drawn from Judah and Benjamin, numbered over half a million.

Asa defeats the Ethiopians (14 : 9-15)

Now Zerah the Ethiopian invaded Judah with a million men. Then Asa cried earnestly for help to God; and he heard him and smote the Ethiopians. In their flight southward, they were utterly routed by Judah, who captured immense booty.

The returning army was met and addressed by the prophet Azariah. He pointed the moral of the earlier

[1] Contradicts 15 : 17, as well as 1 K. 15 : 14.

The exhortation of Azariah; Asa's reform (15 : 1-15)

history: how that often, after God had suffered them to be grievously oppressed, and bereft of divine enlightenment, because of their sin, he yet was found of them when they sought him. Let them then face with energy the work that lay before them, in the sure hope of reward. Thus encouraged, Asa at once addressed himself to a religious reform; and, stimulated by his enthusiasm, a great public gathering at Jerusalem solemnly resolved to seek their God with all their heart, those refusing to be punished with death. Jehovah showed his favor by giving them rest.

(15 : 16-18) Concluding notice of the reformation (1 K. 15 : 13-15)

(15 : 19) There was *NO WAR UNTIL THE THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR OF ASA'S REIGN*[1] . . . (1 K. 15 : 16)

(16 : 1-6) Asa's war with Israel . . . (1 K. 15 : 17-22)

Hanani's reproof of Asa (16 : 7-10)

After Asa had bribed Benhadad of Aram to divert Baasha of Israel from Judah by attacking him, Hanani the seer announced to him that for his folly in leaning upon the king of Aram, forgetful of the God who sleeplessly guarded the interests of all men everywhere, whose heart was perfect toward him, and who had delivered him from the huge and formidable hosts of the Ethiopians, from henceforth he would be vexed with wars. The angry king straightway put the seer in prison.

(16 : 11-14) Sickness, death, and burial of Asa . (1 K. 15 : 23, 24)

(16 : 12, 14) **In his old age, Asa was sore diseased in his feet;**

[1] In the Hebrew this verse reads, "and there was no war," etc.

yet he sought not Jehovah, but the physicians. His burial was celebrated with great honors.

(e) *Jehoshaphat* (2 Chr. 17 to 20)

Asa's son and successor Jehoshaphat garrisoned Judah and certain cities of Ephraim. Jehovah gave him prosperity and honor because he walked in his commandments and not after the doings of Israel: for example, *HE REMOVED THE HIGH PLACES*[1] (1 K. 22 : 43). Jehoshaphat's prosperity (17 : 1-6)

To spread the knowledge of the law of Jehovah among his people, he had them instructed by a circuit commission composed of civil and religious dignitaries, who expounded the book of the law.[2] The book of the law taught (17 : 7-9)

His piety was rewarded with peace; for the fear of Jehovah restrained the surrounding nations from going to war with Jehoshaphat. He even received tribute from Philistines and Arabians. He grew in power and prosperity, and his army numbered considerably over a million men. Jehoshaphat's power (17 : 10-19)

Ahab and Jehoshaphat attack Ramoth in Gilead: Ahab is slain . . . . . (18) (1 K. 22 : 1-35)

In the battle Jehoshaphat cried out, and Jehovah helped him, and God[3] moved them to depart from him. (18 : 31)

[1] Compare 2 Chr. 20 : 33.

[2] To the Chronicler, this would be the Pentateuch. It may in reality have been the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 20 : 22 to 23 : 33).

[3] Notice the curious transition in the names of God: cf. 20 : 29, and especially 26 : 5.

Jehoshaphat reproved by a seer (19 : 1-4)

Jehoshaphat, on his return from Ramoth to Jerusalem, was met by Jehu the seer, who threatened him with the wrath of Jehovah for assisting the ungodly king of Israel. Then the king instituted an earnest reform throughout the land.

His judicial system (19 : 5-11)

He established a judicial system, appointing judges in various cities of Judah, and charging them to be, as before God, incorruptible and impartial in the administration of justice. In Jerusalem, too, he appointed a court of appeal, consisting of Levites, priests, and heads of fathers' houses, with presiding officers, to decide sincerely, as before God, disputed cases carried to them from the cities.

Projected attack on Judah: Jehoshaphat's prayer (20 : 1-13)

Jehoshaphat, hearing that an invading army of Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunim had reached the western shore of the Dead Sea, proclaimed a fast throughout Judah, and, before the congregation assembled at the temple, prayed that the God who rules over all and whose might is irresistible, the God who had given the land to the seed of Abraham his friend forever, the God whose sanctuary was the pledge that he would hear and save all who cried to him—that this their God would help them against the invaders whose land had been spared by Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. "We have no might," he prayed, "neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee."

Jehovah's signal victory (20 : 14-30)

Then the spirit of Jehovah came upon a certain Levite. He counselled them to go out against the enemy confidently on the morrow. They would not need to

fight. Jehovah would himself save them. "The battle is not yours," he said, "but God's." Whereupon king and people bowed in worship, and the Levites sang praises. Forth they went on the morrow, the king earnestly exhorting them to believe in their God and in his prophets; for faith would be crowned with victory. He appointed singers to precede the army and sing praises to Jehovah. No sooner had they begun than Jehovah created a panic among the enemy, and they fell to slaying one another; so that when Judah came up they found the enemy all dead, and abundance of spoil. This gathered, they held a meeting for thanksgiving in the valley thenceforward known as the Valley of Blessing.

Jehoshaphat *JOINED* Ahaziah of Israel in naval enterprise, and **for his wickedness his ships were wrecked, as a prophet had announced . . .** (1 K. 22 : 49) (20 : 35-37)

(f) *Jehoram* (2 Chr. 21)

Jehoshaphat's son and successor, Jehoram, murdered his brothers and certain of the princes. Jehoram murders his brothers (21 : 1-4)

Jehoram's idolatry; the revolt of Edom and Libnah (2 K. 8 : 17-22) (21 : 5-10) (21 : 10, 11)

Libnah revolted from Jehoram, because he had forsaken Jehovah, the God of his fathers, and had led Judah into apostasy.

Accordingly he received a letter from Elijah the prophet,[1] announcing a stern divine judgment on his Elijah's letter: Jehoram's calamitous end (21 : 12-20)

[1] Dead already in Jehoshaphat's time, many years before. 2 K. 3 : 11.

sins of apostasy and murder ; and the prophetic word was fulfilled. His land and family suffered from raids of the Philistines and Arabians. He himself died of a sore disease, and was buried in the city of David, but *NOT* in the sepulchres of the kings . (2 K. 8 : 24)

(g) *Ahaziah* (2 Chr. 22 : 1-9)

(22 : 1-6) Ahaziah : his alliance with Joram [1] . (2 K. 8 : 24[b]-29)

Ahaziah's doom (22 : 7-9) **The divine judgment which Jehu executed on Joram fell upon Ahaziah too ; but he received burial, because he was the son of the faithful Jehoshaphat.**

(h) *Athaliah* (2 Chr. 22 : 10 to 23 : 21)

(22 : 10 to 23 : 21) The usurpation of Athaliah and revolution carried through by Jehoiada [2] . . . . (2 K. 11)

(23 : 2, 4, 6-8) **Jehoiada gathered the Levites and the heads of fathers' houses to Jerusalem.** *PRIESTS AND LEVITES WERE TO ACT AS DOORKEEPERS, AND NONE BUT THEY [3] MIGHT ENTER THE TEMPLE.* **The *LEVITES* were to surround the king. The Levites and all Judah carried out Jehoiada's instructions** . . (2 K. 11 : 4-9)

[1] Ahaziah was 42 years of age at his accession, according to v. 2. In 2 K. 8 : 26, he is only 22. That is practically supported by LXX of this passage, which makes his age 20.

[2] Essentially the same as 2 K. 11 : 4-20, with the very significant substitution of Levites for a bodyguard. Naturally singers and players (ordained by David, v. 18) are introduced (v. 13), and the temple offices are distributed on the basis of David's organization (v. 18).

[3] In 2 K. 11 : 11 it was lay guards who were in the temple.

(i) *Joash* (2 Chr. 24)

Joash : his restoration of the temple (24 : 1-14)
(2 K. 11 : 21 to 12 : 14)

Joash brought Jehoiada to account for not *INSISTING* (24 : 6, 9)
THAT THE LEVITES SHOULD SECURE FROM THE CITIES OF JUDAH THE TEMPLE TAX WHICH MOSES HAD LAID UPON ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS[1]
(2 K. 12 : 4-8)

SACRED VESSELS WERE MADE OUT OF THE SUR- (24 : 14)
PLUS MONEY . . . . . (2 K. 12 : 13, 14)

Religious decline : the murder of the prophet Zechariah (24 : 15-22)

The death of the good Jehoiada was the signal for a relapse into idolatry. The warning voices of the prophets were disregarded. One—and that Jehoiada's faithful son—was silenced by assassination, on the command of the ungrateful king ; and he died with a prayer on his lips to God for vengeance.

Aramean invasion : murder of Joash (24 : 23-27)

Within a year the king and his numerous people were humiliated by a small band of Aramean invaders, and finally he was slain by his servants in vengeance for the blood of Jehoiada's son.[2]

(j) *Amaziah* (2 Chr. 25)

Amaziah : his vengeance on his father's murderers (25 : 1-4)
(2 K. 14 : 1-6)

To augment still further his great army, Amaziah

[1] Ex. 30 : 12-16 ; a tax for the support of the tabernacle and its worship.

[2] On the Chronicler's theory, this section probably stands to the preceding in the relation of effect to cause. The section to which it is parallel is 2 K. 12 : 17-21.

Israelites hired and dismissed by Amaziah ; his successes against Edom (25 : 5-13)

hired a large contingent from Israel ; but he dismissed them again at the bidding of a man of God, who urged that Jehovah was not with Israel. The disbanded men departed in anger, attacked and despoiled the cities of Judah while the Judean army was winning victories in Edom, ten thousand of whose people they had slain in battle, and other ten thousand by hurling them from a rock.[1]

His foolish idolatry (25 : 14-16)

Amaziah adopted the gods of the country he had conquered, and threatened with violence a prophet who pointed out his folly. Then said the prophet : "I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this." And so it was.

Its consequences (25 : 17-28)

For his challenge of Joash king of Israel led to his defeat and death . . . . (2 K. 14 : 8-20)

(25 : 27)

The conspiracy which resulted in his death had its origin in his apostasy.

(k) *Uzziah* (2 Chr. 26)

(26 : 1-4)

The excellence and length of his reign (2 K. 14 : 21, 22 ; 15 : 1-3)

Uzziah's enterprise in peace and war (26 : 5-15)

Uzziah prospered as long as he sought Jehovah. In war he was successful against the Philistines and Arabians ; he received tribute from the Ammonites, and his fame spread far and wide. He fortified Jerusalem, built towers in the desert, encouraged agriculture and

[1] "Rock" may here be the fortress of Sela, cf. 2 K. 14 : 7. In any case, this passage is an expansion of that verse.

maintained a large standing army, well equipped with all manner of military appliances.

But prosperity bred pride, and he presumed, despite the protests of the priests, to offer incense, which it was only lawful for the priests to offer. Forthwith on his angry brow the mark of leprosy appeared, and in haste he left the temple for ever, with the mark of the divine punishment upon him. The punishment for his arrogance (26 : 16-21)

Concluding notice . . . . (2 K. 15 : 6, 7) (26 : 22, 23)

(l) *Jotham* (2 Chr. 27)

The length and nature of his reign . (2 K. 15 : 32-35) (27 : 1, 2)

Jotham extended the system of fortifications in Judah, put the Ammonites to tribute, and grew mighty because he ordered his ways before Jehovah his God. Jotham's fortifications and prosperity (27 : 3-6)

Concluding notice . . . (2 K. 15 : 36, 38) (27 : 7-9)

(m) *Ahaz* (2 Chr. 28)

His grievous idolatry . . . (2 K. 16 : 2-4) (28 : 1-4)

He made molten images for the Baalim, and sacrificed in the valley of Hinnom. (28 : 2, 3)

Ahaz, for his apostasy, sustained a very grievous defeat from the allied kings of Aram and Israel, the slain and captured being over a quarter of a million. Then a prophet addressed the victorious army of Israel, telling them that the God who had thus shown his anger against Judah was angry with them also, and urged them to deliver up the captives. The leaders, acknowledging Israel's guilt, acted on his ad- The defeat of Ahaz; a prophet rebukes Israel (28 : 5-15)

vice, and with noble generosity sent the captives back to Jericho.

Raids upon Judah (28 : 17-19) **For the sin of Ahaz divine judgment fell in the form of destructive raids upon Judah by the Edomites and the Philistines.**

(28 : 16, 20, 21) The costly help of the Assyrian king TURNED OUT A DELUSION . . . . . (2 K. 16 : 7-9)

Ahaz's idolatry (28 : 22-25) **Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of the victorious Arameans,[1] that he might secure their help, but they were his ruin.**

(28 : 26, 27) Concluding notice . . . (2 K. 16 : 19, 20)

(n) *Hezekiah* (2 Chr. 29 to 32)

(29 : 1, 2) The length and excellence of Hezekiah's reign (2 K. 18 : 2, 3)

The cleansing of the temple (29) **In the very opening of his reign, Hezekiah, eager to make a covenant with the God of Israel, began his great reform. The Levites were commissioned, after sanctifying themselves, to cleanse the disgraced and neglected temple, that so the wrath of Jehovah might be appeased. This order they promptly executed, priests and Levites dividing up the work. They replaced the vessels destroyed by Ahaz,[2] and informed the king on the completion of their task. Then going**

[1] Perhaps "Assyrians" are intended; the difference in Hebrew would not be great. If, however, the text is correct, as the reference to Damascus suggests, then we have here the Chronicler's modified version of the story of the Damascus altar. With v. 24 cf. 2 K. 16 : 17, 18.

[2] Cf. 28 : 24; 2 K. 16 : 17.

to the temple, Hezekiah commanded the priests to offer a sin-offering for all Israel—for the royal house, the temple, and the people. While the burnt offering was being offered, the people worshipped to the musical accompaniment of Levites and priests. Then, after songs of praise, on the king's invitation, the people offered sacrifices of their own—thank offerings and burnt-offerings—so many indeed that the priests, loth to sanctify themselves, had to be assisted in flaying them by the more enthusiastic Levites; and king and people were filled with joy at all that God had wrought.

The passover (30)

Then he determined to celebrate the passover at Jerusalem on a great scale. To this end he despatched letters throughout all Israel and Judah from north to south, inviting all to come to Jerusalem, and assuring them that if they would but turn to their gracious God, he would look again with favour upon them, and bring their dear ones back from exile. In Israel many laughed his message to scorn, though not a few humbly obeyed; but Judah was inspired to unanimity. So the great congregation gathered at Jerusalem, where, after removing all traces of idolatry, the passover was celebrated, priests and Levites now taking such parts as were prescribed in the law of Moses. In some ways the celebration was irregular. It was a month behind the legal time;[1] and further, many from Israel were ceremonially unclean, and therefore legally disquali-

[1] Num. 9:1, 5; but cf. vv. 10, 11.

fied from eating the passover. But they were nevertheless allowed to partake. For there was a higher than the legal spirit at work, as is seen in the king's large-hearted prayer to "Jehovah the good" for pardon upon all, if only they worshipped in sincerity. The feast lasted twice the usual time. There was daily praise and abundant sacrifice and great joy. For three centuries Jerusalem had not seen the like.

Provision for the priesthood (31)

The passover was fittingly followed by the destruction of all remaining traces of idolatry in Judah and Israel. Then the people dispersed to their homes. Hezekiah reorganized the priests and Levites, and his request—supported by his own generous example—that the people should contribute toward the sacred dues, met with a response beyond all expectation. Officers were appointed to take charge of and distribute the numerous offerings among the priests, the Levites and their families.

(32 : 1) Sennacherib's entrance into Judah . (2 K. 18 : 13)

Hezekiah's defences (32 : 2-8)

On the approach of Sennacherib, the people stopped the fountains, and Hezekiah strengthened the fortifications of Jerusalem, and encouraged the people, reminding them that the enemy had but an arm of flesh, while they themselves had Jehovah their God to fight their battles.

(32 : 9-21) Sennacherib's campaign; the deliverance of Jerusalem (2 K. 18 : 17 to 19 : 37)

Fame of Hezekiah (32 : 22, 23)

The remarkable deliverance brought Hezekiah honor in the sight of all the world.

The Babylonian embassy: Hezekiah's wealth, and building enterprise . . . . . (2 K. 20) (32 : 24-33)

Forgetful of Jehovah's goodness in bringing him back from the gates of death, Hezekiah waxed proud, but on humbling himself he was forgiven and enjoyed great power and prosperity. The Babylonian embassy was God's way of testing what was in his heart.[1] All Judah did him honor at his death.

(o) *Manasseh* (2 Chr. 33 : 1-20)

His idolatry . . . . . (2 K. 21 : 1-10) (33 : 1-10)

For his disregard of the divine word Manasseh was carried away to Babylon, whence, however, after humble confession and prayer, Jehovah his God brought him back again to his own land. Manasseh's exile, repentance and return (33 : 11-13)

He strengthened the capital, abolished idolatry, and made the worship of Jehovah imperative. His reforms (33 : 14-19)

His death and burial . . . (2 K. 21 : 18) (32 : 20)

(p) *Amon* (2 Chr. 33 : 21-25)

His brief and wicked reign . . (2 K. 21 : 19-24) (33 : 21-25)

Amon did not humble himself before Jehovah, as Manasseh his father had done. His perversity (33 : 20)

[1] In 2 K. 20 : 12, 13 the pride is connected with the embassy. Here v. 27 preceding v. 31 makes a very different impression from v. 13 in Kings following v. 12.

(q) *Josiah* (2 Chr. 34, 35)

(34) His reforms : the finding of the book of the law (2 K. 22)

(34 : 3) **Josiah's reforms began in his** TWELFTH **year.**
(2 K. 22 : 3; 23 : 23)

(34 : 8, 14, 18) *SIX YEARS AFTERWARD* (v. 8), in the course of temple repairs, was found the book of the law **of Jehovah given by Moses** (v. 15), and Shaphan read *THEREIN*[1] (v. 18).

(34 : 33) **The effects of the reformation lasted during Josiah's lifetime.**

(35 : 1-19) Josiah's passover . . . (2 K. 23 : 21-23)
Josiah instructed the priests and Levites to celebrate the great passover festival in accordance with the law of Moses, and with splendid generosity king and princes furnished people, priests, and Levites with sacrificial animals.

(35 : 20, 22, 24) Josiah's sad death . . . (2 K. 23 : 29, 30)
Necho's prophetic word to Josiah fulfilled
(35 : 21-25) **Necho, conscious that he was fulfilling the divine purpose, warned Josiah of the doom that would be his, if he persisted in fighting with him ; but Josiah, regardless of the divine message, perished. Jeremiah and all Judah mourned for him, and elegies are still sung.**[2]

(35 : 26, 27) Concluding notice . . . . (2 K. 23 : 28)

[1] In K., he read *it*, i.e. roughly, the Book of Deuteronomy. But to the Chronicler, the law is the Pentateuch, which was too long to read through in the manner described, therefore he says *therein*.

[2] Virtually an independent version of 2 K. 23 : 29, 30.

(r) *Jehoahaz* (2 Chr. 36 : 1-4)

His brief reign and hapless fate . (2 K. 23 : 30b-34) (36 : 1-4)

(s) *Jehoiakim* (2 Chr. 36 : 5-8)

His evil reign . . . (2 K. 23 : 36 to 24 : 6) (36 : 5-8)

Besides carrying away certain vessels of the temple (36 : 6-7) **to Babylon, Nebuchadrezzar put Jehoiakim in chains to carry him away also.**

(t) *Jehoiachin* (2 Chr. 36 : 9, 10)

His brief reign and exile to Babylon [1] (2 K. 24 : 8-17) (36 : 9-10)

(u) *Zedekiah* (2 Chr. 36 : 11-21)

His rebellion,[1] the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylo- (36 : 11-21)
nians and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple
(2 K. 24 : 18 to 25 : 21)

Zedekiah was stiffnecked and hardhearted, rejecting the message of the prophet Jeremiah, and breaking his solemn oath of fealty to Nebuchadrezzar. Priests and people likewise spurned the prophetic word; until at last the wrath of Jehovah rose against his people, and there was no remedy. So the desolate land kept Sabbath for seventy years, as Jeremiah [2] had foretold.

(v) *The Decree of Cyrus* (2 Chr. 36 : 22, 23; cf. Ezra 1 : 1-3)

[1] The very summary recapitulation of the facts connected with these two deportations of Judah is highly characteristic.

[2] 25 : 11; 29 : 10.

V

INTRODUCTION TO EZRA-NEHEMIAH

These two books, originally one in Hebrew, are an obvious continuation of Chronicles,[1] and in their present form are from the same hand. The phraseology, the temper, the point of view are similar. Here, as there, is displayed profound interest in the temple, its ritual, and its ministers;[2] here, as there, the Levites are prominent[3] and the musical service is emphasized.[4] Certain older traits receive in this age a new prominence, as fasting[5] and prayer.[6] The legal spirit of the age has also engendered a certain self-righteousness.[7] "The days of Nehemiah" lie in the past; they constitute one epoch, as the days of Zerubbabel constitute another.[8] In these books no less surely than in Chronicles we have to do with the editorial work of the Chronicler. What, however, were his sources?

Those sources, though seldom cited,[9] are of unusual importance, as they bear, in the main, the stamp of origi-

[1] Compare 2 Chr. 36 : 22, 23 with Ezr. 1 : 1-3.
[2] Neh. 13 : 29, etc.
[3] Neh. 8 : 7, 9; 9 : 4, 38.
[4] Ezr. 3 : 10, 11; Neh. 12 : 27, 36, 46.
[5] Ezr. 8 : 21; 10 : 6; Neh. 1 : 4.
[6] Ezr. 8 : 23; 9 : 6-15; Neh. 1 : 4; 4 : 9.
[7] Neh. 5 : 19; 13 : 14, 22.
[8] Neh. 12 : 47.
[9] Cf. Neh. 12 : 23, the book of the chronicles.

nality. Though here, as in Kings, the author breathes much of his own spirit into the history he records, he fortunately leaves much of it practically intact and often transcribes without adapting. This is especially true of the long section, Neh. 1 to 6, a graphic story in the first person, which comes from the personal memoirs of Nehemiah. It is also clear that one of the sources was the memoirs of Ezra, for the sections Ezra 7 : 27 to 8 : 34 and 9 : 1-15 speak of him in the first person, though the abrupt transition in the tenth chapter from the first person to the third [1] shows the hand of the editor working on the original documents. It is not impossible that he may have edited even that portion of the memoirs which has been preserved in the first person. We do know for a fact that he retouched documents which look like originals. A comparison, for instance, of the decree of Cyrus as given in Ezra 1 : 2 ff. with the form of that decree preserved in the Aramaic document of Ezra 6 : 3 ff., leaves no doubt as to which is the original. The Chronicler's hand is obvious in the representation of the decree as a charge given by Jehovah, God of heaven, to Cyrus. Thus we have to face the possibility, which amounts to a practical certainty, that the Chronicler's hand has touched even the original letters and documents preserved in Aramaic, Ezra 4 : 8 to 6 : 14[a] and 7 : 12-26,[2] but the influence there is, in the main, formal rather than material.

[1] 9 : 5; 10 : 1. [2] Cf. especially 6 : 9, 10, 12.

Thus the sources are lists, official documents, and memoirs, all of which were in places worked over and sometimes amplified by the Chronicler. His priestly bias seems to have occasionally controlled his presentation of fact. For example, many considerations[1] tend to confirm the conclusion that Ezra's expedition is antedated, and that Nehemiah arrived before him and prepared the way for him. Again at the expense of the continuity and even coherence of his story, the Chronicler dramatically concentrates in the forefront of his narrative the Samaritan opposition to the Jews—an opposition which, on the confession of the recorded dates themselves, covered a period of at least about eighty years, and increased in virulence as the years went on.[2]

These facts compel, for historical purposes, a reconstruction of the order of the narrative, and this reconstruction becomes all the more imperative when we observe that no less than three chapters of Nehemiah (8 to 10) appear to come from the memoirs of Ezra, and to be connected in time, spirit, and language with Ezra 7 to 10. Like the antedating of Ezra's expedition, the general disor-

[1] For instance, Nehemiah's memoirs make no allusion to the alleged measures of Ezra, nor did Ezra's company assist at the building of the walls, as they surely would have done had they been present. Further, Ezra's measures, especially with regard to intermarriage, are much more decisive than Nehemiah's, which have all the appearance of being tentative. Cf. Neh. 13 : 25 with Ezr. 10.

[2] Ezr. 4.

der of the narrative was probably caused by the desire to give the priest Ezra precedence over the layman Nehemiah.

It was peculiarly fitting that the priestly historian should undertake to tell the story of the new life that came to his people with the return of Ezra the scribe from Babylon. Though the institutions which he so deeply loved were for him rooted in a very distant past, yet the work of Ezra gave them, so to speak, new interest and stability. But why has he nothing to tell us of the period that lies between the return of Nehemiah and that glad day, seventy years before, when they finished the building of the temple and kept the festival with joy? The silence is ominous. It suggests a catastrophe over which the Chronicler would fain hasten to a more congenial tale. But the vague and awful suggestions of that silence receive a body from scattered hints in prophecy. The temple was completed in 516 B. C. We know how extravagant were the hopes that gathered round Zerubbabel.[1] We see in the gloomy world of Malachi how these hopes, how all hopes, had been dashed. Even the temple and its worship are now all but a thing for scorn.[2] Sellin has suggested[3] —though it can be no more than a hypothesis—that during the governorship of Zerubbabel, the Jews may have rebelled against their Persian master, and paid for their daring hopes a terrible penalty, in the shape of the cruci-

[1] Haggai 2 : 23. [2] Mal. 1 : 7. [3] In his book *Serubbabel* (1898).

fixion of their leader, the devastation of their temple, and the destruction of all hope of independence under a native king. In the light of this possibility, the opening scene in Nehemiah gains new interest and pathos, and the emphatic sacerdotalism of the new order becomes more than ever intelligible.

Throughout the following section plain type represents the original sources; **bold-faced type** indicates the Chronicler's additions to or modifications of it, or contributions original to himself.

VI

THE RESTORATION

1. *The Return* (Ezra 1 to 6)

The decree of Cyrus and the return (1)

In fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy, Cyrus King of Persia **at the bidding of Jehovah,** published a decree [1] in 538 B. C., granting permission to the exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple and enjoining that the exiles receive local support.[2] Enthusiastically did **the leading men, the priests and the Levites** obey; and they were sped upon their way by gifts from their neighbors. **They took with them the numerous sacred vessels,** once captured by Nebuchadrezzar, now committed by Cyrus to the charge of Sheshbazzar, a prince of Judah.

Altar built and sacrifice established 536 B. C. (3 : 1-7)

In the seventh month a great gathering was held at Jerusalem, at which **under the leadership of Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the governor** the altar was built, **that the Mosaic sacrifices might be regularly offered. The feast of booths was also held and after that the regular sacrificial system was resumed.** But the foundation of the temple was not yet laid.

Laying the foundation of the temple (3 : 8-13)

Measures, however, were at once taken with this end in view. In the second month of the second year,

[1] Ezra 1 : 1-3 = 2 Chr. 36 : 22, 23.

[2] Since the Chronicler's sources were already priestly, it is often difficult to distinguish accurately between them and his additions or corrections.

the returned exiles, headed by their leaders, addressed themselves to the work, the oversight of which they entrusted to the Levites; and the foundation was laid to the accompaniment, in ancient fashion, of music and song by priests and Levites. The joy of the young was mingled with the tears of those who had seen the glorious temple of Solomon.

Samaritan opposition (4 : 1-5, 24)

The Samaritans requested permission to assist in the building of the temple, on the ground of their common worship of Jehovah. On the leaders refusing, they hampered the activity of the Jews, and plotted against them for sixteen years, till the second year of Darius.

Temple begun 520 B.C. (5 : 1, 2)

Then under the stimulus of the preaching of Haggai, Zechariah, and others, the real work of building was begun.

Tattenai interferes, but the Jews appeal to Cyrus's decree (5 : 3-17)

Their efforts were challenged by the suspicious Tattenai, Persian governor of the western provinces. He, however, by the grace of God, before prohibiting them, formally communicated with Darius, intimating the rapid progress of the building, the names of the leaders, and the reply of the Jews to his challenge, in which they had appealed to a decree of Cyrus granting them permission to return and rebuild the temple, **and had pleaded the uninterrupted progress of the building since the laying of the foundation stone by Sheshbazzar.**

The decree found and confirmed by Darius (6 : 1-12)

On Tattenai's recommendation, Darius instituted a search for the alleged decree, which was at length discovered at Ecbatana, whereupon he not only warned Tattenai not to interfere with the work, but passed an irrevo-

cable decree that part of the royal tribute be placed at their disposal, that they should be regularly supplied with all that was necessary for sacrifices **of sweet savour,** and that prayer be offered for his dynasty and "may the God **who has caused his name to dwell there** destroy all who thwart the building of his house."

The temple finished 516 B. C. (6 : 13-18)

Thus under the stimulus of the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah, the building was successfully finished in 516 B. C. **Priests, Levites and returned exiles** kept the dedication of the temple with joy, offered liberal sacrifices and arranged for the worship **in accordance with the law of Moses.**

The glad passover (6 : 19-22)

A great passover feast was held in which all, with glad gratitude, participated—both the returned exiles and all who had separated themselves [1] from the filthiness of the heathen of the land.

2. *The Work of Nehemiah* (Neh. 1 to 7; 11 to 13)

Judah in affliction: Nehemiah fasts and prays (Neh. 1)

Nehemiah, royal cupbearer in the Persian palace, overcome by the news of the distress of his fellow-countrymen in Judea, and of the destruction of the walls of Jerusalem, fasted and prayed long and passionately with earnest confession to the faithful and terrible Jehovah that, in accordance with his ancient promise, he would hear the prayer of his redeemed who were again oppressed, and grant Nehemiah himself favor in the sight of the king.

[1] Perhaps those who had not been carried into exile.

Goes to Jerusalem and stirs up the community 445 B. C. (2)

On being questioned by the king three or four months afterward touching the grief which his countenance betrayed, with the courage of faith he asked and obtained from him permission to travel under Persian protection to Judah, with a view to the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem. The arrival of a man with such a mission was naturally unwelcome to the foreign neighbors. But without divulging the purpose that God had put into his heart, he went out one night to inspect the state of the walls, riding till the rubbish compelled him to go on foot. Then with a zeal inspired by knowledge, he kindled in the whole community the desire to rebuild the walls, appealing to Jehovah's manifest grace in the king's generosity toward him. The movement was received with ridicule by the foreigners. But to taunts and insinuation Nehemiah replied that they had no right in Jerusalem, and that the God of heaven would crown their own despised efforts with success.

The building of the walls (3)

The work was at once prosecuted with vigor and speed. All but the nobles of Tekoa lent a helping hand, from the high-priest to the private man, from the nobles to the trade-guilds.

Foreign opposition frustrated by Nehemiah (4)

Irritated, however, by the progress of the building, the foreigners again ridiculed their infatuation, and provoked Nehemiah to an earnest prayer for vengeance. The redoubled efforts of the builders, who had now almost succeeded in closing the breaches of the walls, so enraged

the foreigners that they determined upon a sudden attack. Nehemiah, however, frustrated their plans by making adequate preparations for this contingency, and strengthened the hearts of the despondent people not only by his own heroic example, but also by reminding them that their God, the great and terrible Jehovah, would fight for them.

Nehemiah rebukes the rapacity of the Jewish nobles (5 : 1-13)

At this juncture the wrongs of the poorer people found a voice. To procure money for food and for the royal tribute, they had been driven to mortgage their property to their wealthier brethren, and even to sell their children. At a great public meeting, Nehemiah indignantly accused the leading men of their unbrotherly rapacity, contrasted their conduct with his own and that of his friends, and finally induced them to restore the mortgaged property, binding them by an oath, and invoking on traitors a solemn curse.

His own generous practice (5 : 14-19)

Nehemiah's example was as good as his precept. For during the whole period of his governorship (444-432 B. C.), he scrupulously refrained, in spite of precedent to the contrary, from burdening the people with the expenses of his large establishment. Nay, he could appeal to an unusually generous hospitality. Hence the justice of his prayer, "Remember unto me, O my God, for good, all that I have for this people."

The walls were now completed. But the enemy, not to be baulked, cunningly proposed a personal conference

Intrigues against Nehemiah frustrated: the walls finished (6)

with Nehemiah on non-Jewish soil. Each invitation he peremptorily refused. Then came a letter with insinuations of rebellion and treason abetted by prophetic intrigue; all of which Nehemiah pointedly denied. As a last resource, a prophet, backed by numbers of the prophetic order, was suborned by the enemy to destroy his credit by inducing him to flee for his life to the temple—a proposal which Nehemiah rejected with scorn. "Remember, O my God, according to these their works, all who would have put me in fear." So, by the manifest help of God, the walls were finished in less than two months, to the humiliation of the enemy. During that period certain members of the Jewish nobility had been in treasonable correspondence with one of the enemy's leaders, who was indeed connected with them by marriage.

The Samaritan indictment (Ezra 4 : 6-23)

About this time[1] the governor of Samaria[2] sent to the Persian government a formal indictment of the Jews, accusing them[3] of aiming ultimately at independence in their efforts to rebuild the city walls, and urging that a search of the official records of the government would show that Jerusalem had been in the past notorious as a centre of rebellion and that the fortification of the city

[1] In the reign of Artaxerxes, 465-424 B. C.

[2] The Samaritans were descendants of the mixed population mentioned in 2 K. 17 : 24, and of other peoples deported from the east in the next century by Osnapper (Ezr. 4 : 10), probably Assurbanipal, 668-628 B. C.

[3] As before in the reign of Xerxes, 486-465 B. C., v. 6.

might mean the loss of the western provinces at any moment. **The king finding the official records to corroborate the letter, ordered the instant suspension of the building until further notice—an order which was carried out with alacrity and not without violence by the jealous enemies of the Jews.**

Protective measures: classification of the people (7 : 1-69)

Nehemiah then placed the city in charge of two officials, and took vigorous precautions to have it strongly guarded, and more thickly peopled. For the latter purpose, he classified the people, keeping in view the list [1] of returned exiles drawn up under Zerubbabel, about ninety years before, which included laity and clergy, and he provisionally excluded all the latter who could not prove their claims to the priesthood.

The city repeopled (11 : 1-24)

The rulers of the people were content to dwell at Jerusalem, and the population of the town was increased by a draft, selected by lot, of one-tenth of the population resident outside the capital as well as by a body of volunteers who together represented all classes of the community.[2]

The population of the province (11 : 25-36)

The rest of the people [3] dwelt in various towns and villages.

Registers of priestly and Levitical houses (12 : 1-26)

Representatives of the twenty-two priestly and eight Levitical houses returned with Zerubbabel and Joshua in 536 B. C. In the period between 536 and 331 there were five high-priests. For the period 499 to 463 there were

[1] Neh. 7 : 6-69 = Ezra 2 : 1-67.
[2] 11 : 3-19 = Chr. 9 : 2-17.
[3] Judah (v. 25) Benjamin (v. 31).

twenty priestly houses with heads. Registers of the heads of Levitical families were kept down to the time of Alexander the Great. Another list is brought down to the close of the fifth century.

The dedication of the walls (12 : 27-43)

To celebrate the dedication of the walls, the Levites and the singers were brought from the various villages to Jerusalem, and there was a general purification—of priests, Levites, people, and wall. Then Nehemiah organized two processions—one headed by Hoshaiah with half the princes of Judah, **accompanied by priestly trumpeters preceded by Ezra;** the other headed by Nehemiah himself with the rest of the princes, which marched in opposite directions round the wall, singing praises, until they met before the temple. **They offered great sacrifices, and joy reigned supreme.**

Loyal offerings to the temple service (12 : 44-47)

At that time steps were taken to secure the regulation and distribution of the offerings for the priests and the Levites made by the eager people. For the period of Nehemiah, like that of Zerubbabel, was distinguished for its loyalty to the temple service, even the singers and the porters receiving their daily portion.

Nehemiah enforces the sanctity of the temple (13 : 4-9)

On his return to Jerusalem in 432 B. C., after a lengthened absence, Nehemiah found to his indignation that the high-priest had assigned one of the temple chambers to Tobiah the Ammonite, who was a relative by marriage.[1] Without more ado, he ejected Tobiah's property and restored the chamber to its original sacred use.

[1] Cf. 6 : 17, 18 ; 3 : 29, 30.

His religious zeal and vigorous initiative were shown in other ways. He promptly took steps to secure payment of their dues to the Levites who, through deficient revenue, were compelled to scatter about the country for their livelihood to the neglect of the temple service. "Remember me, O my God, concerning this." He institutes reforms (13 : 10-14)

Again, by vigorous measures, coupled with exhortation and threats, he succeeded in securing the Sabbath day from desecration by work and, in particular, by trade. He defends the Sabbath (13 : 15-22)

With an energy inspired by righteous indignation, he proceeded against the Jews who had married foreign women, appealing to the tragic fall of the great King Solomon, and compelling them to a solemn oath that they would forswear all such sinful intermarriage.[1] He was no respecter of persons; he even expelled from Jerusalem a grandson of the high-priest, who had married the daughter of the Samaritan Sanballat.[2] With a prayer that God would avenge the profanation of the priesthood, he reorganized the duties and privileges of the clergy. "Remember me, O my God, for good." He sternly opposes intermarriage with foreigners (13 : 23-31)

3. *The Work of Ezra* (Ezra 7 to 10; Neh. 8 to 10)

In course of time, by the grace of the king, and according to the good hand of his God upon him, Ezra the

[1] Nehemiah forbids intermarriage between *the children* (13 : 25), Ezra (10 : 11 ff.) demands the divorce of *the wives*.

[2] This gave impulse to the Samaritan schism, and ultimately led to the building of the rival temple on Mount Gerizim (cf. John 4 : 20).

The commission of Artaxerxes to Ezra (Ezra 7 : 1-26)

scribe, of priestly lineage, accompanied both by the laity and by the various grades of the clergy, arrived at Jerusalem, after a four months' march from Babylon, with the object of investigating the religious condition of Judah and Jerusalem, and of teaching the law. He brought with him a letter from Artaxerxes—dictated by fear of the divine wrath against his dynasty—embodying a decree that empowered any Jew who pleased to accompany him, offering very liberal contributions toward the sacrifices and for other needful purposes, giving permission to take gifts of the natives and Jews, instructing the treasurers of the western provinces to give him, within certain limits, anything he might further require, exempting the clergy from taxation, and commissioning Ezra to appoint judges to teach the law, with varying penalties for disobedience.

Ezra and his company return (Ezra 7 : 27 to 8 : 36 and Neh. 7 : 70-73[a])

After [1] gratefully acknowledging Jehovah's grace to the people and to himself at this juncture, Ezra gathered at a short distance from Babylon, all who were to accompany him—priests, princes, and laymen. On discovering that there were no Levites among them, he had their places taken by Nethinim, servants of the Levites, brought from their home in Casiphia. Then he proclaimed a fast, with public humiliation and prayer for protection by the way (for, after having assured the king that their God protected all who sought him, he could not well ask for a body-

[1] 7 : 27 to 9 : 15 (except 8 : 35, 36) are from Ezra's memoirs, and in the first person.

guard), and God heard their prayer. He then committed to the charge of select priests the Persian and Jewish offerings for the temple, taking scrupulous precautions to have them safely delivered at Jerusalem. Then they took their departure and reached Jerusalem in safety,[1] being preserved by their God from the dangers of the way. The offerings also were found on inspection to be intact. **Then the returned exiles offered a sumptuous burnt offering and sin offering, and they received the help of the western governors, on presenting the royal commission.** Liberal contributions were also made by the governor, the chiefs, and the people.

The assembly; the reading of the law; the celebration of the feast of booths (Neh. 7 : 73b to 8 : 18)

On the first day of the seventh month at a national assembly, held at Jerusalem, Ezra, supported by thirteen [2] others, read to the people at their request, for several hours from the Book of the Law.[3] The reading was relieved at intervals by the expositions of the Levites. The great congregation listened with reverence and were affected to tears. But Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites bade them eat and drink and be glad, for joy was seemly on this their Lord's holy day. Next day the reading was

[1] The date of Ezra's return is disputed. If his expedition is subsequent to Nehemiah's (cf. Introduction, p. 316, note) the commonly accepted date 458 B. C. will be, of course, impossible. It will have to be after 444, if not after 432. 398 B. C. is the latest possible date that will satisfy the indefinite and confusing chronological hints.

[2] Perhaps twelve.

[3] *I.e.*, the Pentateuch; at least part of it; see next note.

resumed and in accordance with the passage then read,[1] touching the celebration of the feast of booths, they gathered branches and erected booths—a thing that had not been done for over seven hundred years. During the whole of the festival week the law was read daily.

The question of intermarriage: Ezra's prayer (Ezra 9)

Soon the princes appeared before Ezra with a complaint. Not only the people, but even the priests, the Levites and the leading men had been unfaithful to Israel's trust by intermarrying with their heathen neighbors. In deep grief Ezra, accompanied by all the faithful, awaited the hour of the evening oblation. Then on his knees with outstretched hands, he earnestly prayed to God, confessing with shame the national sin from of old, and the justice of all the chastisement that had fallen; especially bewailing their ungrateful disregard of God's recent kindness to them. He had punished them less than they deserved; and they had rewarded his forbearance by defying the prophetic word, and courting judgment by marriage with the heathen. "O God of Israel! thou art righteous; none can stand before thee because of this."

Severe measures against intermarriage (Ezra 10: 1-9)

Ezra's impassioned prayer drew about him a weeping congregation, one of whom, acting as spokesman, proposed to redeem the past by solemnly pledging themselves

[1] If this passage (Lev. 23 : 33-44) was reached by the second day, the "book of the law" then read can hardly have been the whole Pentateuch, but rather only the legislative portion of it. Besides, the reading of the familiar stories in Genesis and Exodus could hardly have produced the impression recorded here. (So Steuernagel.)

to put away their heathen wives and the children born of them. Ezra, seizing the opportunity, exacted an oath to this effect from the leaders of the clergy and people. They, in turn, followed this up by summoning the whole nation to Jerusalem, on pain of forfeiture of property and excommunication.

The text read (Neh. 13 : 1-3)

The passage[1] from the Pentateuch was read which excluded Moabites and Ammonites from the congregation.

The work of the commission (Ezra 10 : 10-44)

"This ye have transgressed," said Ezra, and he urged them to make confession and divorce their wives. But owing to the natural difficulties of the case, aggravated by the inconvenience of the heavy rains, it was agreed, all but unanimously, that the cases should be settled in detail, at dates to be appointed subsequently, when the husbands of the foreign women might appear for trial, accompanied by the elders and judges of their respective cities. The commission, of which Ezra was president, sat for about three months and convicted one hundred and thirteen men, including all grades of the clergy.

Ezra's prayer of confession (Neh. 9)

Less than four weeks afterward, in an assembly purged of all the foreign element, the people after the reading of extensive sections of the law, made a humble confession of sin, led by the Levites under Ezra,[2] who prayed on this wise: "Thou, O Jehovah, art the creator and preserver of all, and thy love has shaped the history of thy people. In thy choice of father Abraham and thy faithfulness to

[1] Deut. 23 : 3-6. [2] So v. 6 in LXX.

him ; in the marvels thou didst work for thine afflicted people in Egypt and the wilderness ; in thy gift of the Sabbath and of good and true laws through Moses on Sinai : in thy merciful pardon of their sins of rebellion ; in thy gifts of victory and children and a fruitful land ; in the deliverers whom thou from time to time didst raise up in answer to their cry, despite their murder of thy prophets ; in thy forbearance for so many years ; in all these things thou hast shown thyself a gracious and a merciful God. Now therefore, O our God, the great and mighty, the terrible and faithful God, have pity upon us for all the sorrow thou hast justly brought upon us all since the time of the kings of Assyria, for we are this day slaves in the wealthy land that thou gavest to our fathers."

The covenant and its terms (Neh. 10)

The prayer issued in a covenant—signed by the governor, the nobles, and the clergy, and ratified by the assembly at large—to observe the Mosaic law. The chief terms of the covenant were that they would not intermarry with their heathen neighbors, nor trade on the Sabbath day, that they would remit all debts and leave the land fallow in the seventh year for the poor, that they would contribute annually to the temple service,[1] as well as to the support of the priests and Levites, and in every way secure the maintenance of the service.

[1] Here ⅓ of a shekel : in Ex. 30 : 13, it is ½ shekel ; cf. 2 Chr. 24 : 6, 9.

VII

THE DATE AND CHARACTER OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

The English version of the Bible, following the Greek and Latin, suggests that the Book of Ruth is a foil, as it is an appendix, to the Book of Judges. Its place in the Hebrew Bible, however, is toward the end, in the section to which Ezra-Nehemiah belongs, and it is not unfair to see in it in reality a foil to those books. Its place in the canon, its language, its reference to the custom described in 4 : 7 as of the "former time," all suggest that the book is late.

The legislation of Ezra[1] which demanded the divorce of all foreign women—justified as it may have been in large measure by the circumstances of the time—could hardly pass without protest from men of prophetic spirit.[2] Probably the Book of Ruth is that protest. Its large-heartedness is the complement of the Leviticalism of Chronicles. It is not merely a beautiful idyll. It is the answer of the prophet to the priest. It is mercy triumphing over judgment. Like Jonah, this book implicitly claims the whole

[1] Ezra 9 and 10.

[2] Malachi's attitude (2 : 10-16) was similar to Ezra's, and doubtless he represented the average opinion of the good men who "feared Jehovah" (Mal. 3 : 16).

world for the love of God. It asserts that a Moabitess may be an Israelite indeed, and that instead of her birth counting against her, her faith should count in her favor. Did not God himself so count it, by making her the ancestress of David? Jehovah is indeed the God of Israel,[1] who visits his own to bless them; [2] but he can equally bless the children of another people,[3] and will deal very kindly with the foreign woman who comes to take refuge under his wings,[4] and who said to her Hebrew mother-in-law "Thy God shall be my God." [5] He is gracious both to the living and to the dead,[6] to Israel indeed, but no less to Moab, and her that cometh unto him, of whatsoever people she be, he will in no wise cast out.

VIII

A PLEA FOR THE NON-ISRAELITE (RUTH)

Ruth goes with Naomi from Moab to Bethlehem of Judah (1)

During the days of the judges, Elimelech of Bethlehem with his wife Naomi and their two sons, were driven by a famine to sojourn in Moab. In process of time, husband and sons died. Now the sons had married women of Moab[7]—Orpah and Ruth. Bereft of husband and children, the aged Naomi resolved to return to her own land of Judah, which Jehovah had meanwhile blessed with

[1] 2 : 12. [2] 1 : 6. [3] 1 : 8, 9. [4] 2 : 12.
[5] 1 : 16. [6] 2 : 20. [7] Cf. Neh. 13 : 1.

plenty; and likewise she bade her daughters-in-law remain in their own land, invoking upon them a blessing from her God for their kindness to herself and to the dead, and earnestly entreating them to remain when they showed themselves willing to go with her. At last Orpah went back to her people and her god; but Ruth clave to Naomi, vowing to live and die beside her, and taking Naomi's people and God to be her own. So in the beginning of barley harvest, the two women came to Bethlehem, where their coming caused much ado; and Naomi gave voice to her sense of the bitter contrast wrought by Jehovah between the former days and these.

Ruth gleans in the fields of Boaz (2 : 1-20ª)

Now Ruth went out to the fields to glean a slender sustenance behind the reapers, and she happened to enter the field of Boaz, a kinsman of Naomi. On learning who she was, and noting her faithfulness and loveliness, he with delicate grace bade her remain in his field and beside his maidens, offering her hospitality and protection, and, in recognition of her loyalty, invoking upon her the blessing of the God of Israel, now her rightful protector. When she came home in the evening with the barley, her story touched Naomi's heart with gratitude to God, who was ever gracious alike to the living and the dead.

She wins his affections (2 : 20ª to 3 : 18)

After telling her with glad pride that Boaz was a near kinsman, Naomi straightway bethought herself of a plan whereby Boaz might be led to promise to play a kinsman's part to Ruth. Her plan fell out happily. Boaz

responded with willingness, nay with joy, for the nobleness of Ruth had won his affections. With high hopes the old woman awaited the issue of the matter.

She becomes through him the ancestress of David (4)

But there was a kinsman nearer than Boaz, with a claim prior to his. So Boaz brought the case before a council of elders at the city gate, and gave his rival the chance of redeeming Elimelech's land. The latter, however, rejected the condition attached thereto—that he should marry the childless Ruth. So, by an old symbolic rite,[1] he abandoned his claim in favor of Boaz, who thereupon redeemed the land, and wedded Ruth amid the prayers of the people that through her Jehovah would build up his house, as the houses of Israel and Judah had been built up in the olden days. And so it was. For, to the joy of the aged Naomi, a son was born to Ruth from whom, in the third generation, sprang the great King David. Thus David is directly descended through Boaz from Judah.

IX

THE CHARACTER AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER

If Ruth was a foil to Ezra, Esther is a foil to Ruth. In the interval that separates the two books—Esther comes probably about the middle of the second century B. C.—

[1] Deut. 25 : 9.

magnanimity has passed into bitterness, and the eyes that once looked so generously on the things of others, now look narrowly only upon their own. In this book we see the culmination, in its most unlovely form, of that exclusiveness which had been encouraged by the legislation of Ezra. The "holy seed"[1] is hated of the world, but it is led through obloquy and malice to triumph, a cruel and unholy triumph.

The story reads more like romance than history. It was written long after the events it describes. The Persian empire is a thing of the past,[2] long enough past to obscure to the writer the chronological perspective; for the hero of the story, which is set early in the reign of Xerxes, and therefore must be somewhere about 480 B. C., is represented as having been carried away to Babylon in 597 B. C. with Jehoiachin.[3] But there are other perplexities. The king who sanctions the decree for the extermination of the Jews in 3 : 9-11 is ignorant of it and surprised by it in 7 : 5. It is hard to say what the underlying basis of fact may be, but the temper of the story is extremely significant of later Jewish feeling.

The book probably served more than one purpose. It explains the origin of the Purim festival;[4] but a co-ordinate purpose must have been to glorify the Jews, and to show how jealously their God watched over their interests and led them to victory. It is a shallow criticism which

[1] Ezr. 9 : 2. [2] 1 : 1, 13. [3] 2 : 5, 6. [4] 9 : 19, 26.

would deny this religious aspect of the book—on however low a plane the religion may be—on the ground that the divine name nowhere occurs in it. The thought, though not the word, is present in Mordecai's confident assurance that enlargement and deliverance would arise to the Jews from one place, if not from another,[1] and that thought determines the whole sequence of the story. A note of the intensest national feeling runs through the book. There the unique self-consciousness of the Jews finds its justification in the facts of history and in the mysterious providence which brings them at the last to "light and gladness and joy and honor."[2] The world hates them; they have enemies, not one[3] but many.[4] But they can overcome the world. Esther the Jewess is better than Vashti,[5] and Mordecai the Jew, like Joseph in the gray past, is next the king.[6] All men must bow to Haman, but not Mordecai; he bowed not nor did him reverence.[7] For he represents a people whom no man could withstand;[8] even the mighty Haman must go down before him.[9] No royal decree can ultimately keep the Jews out of the dominion which is their destiny.[10] Was it any wonder then, that the fear of them fell upon all people[11] and that "many from among the peoples of the land became Jews?"[12]

This emphasis on the uniqueness of Israel is nothing

[1] 4 : 14. [2] 8 : 16. [3] 3 : 10. [4] 9 : 1.
[5] 1 : 19. [6] 10 : 3. [7] 3 : 2. [8] 9 : 2.
[9] 6 : 13. [10] 9 : 1. [11] 8 : 17, 9 : 2. [12] 8 : 17.

new; it is as old as the oracle of Balaam.[1] What is new—or almost new [2]—and disappointing is the expression which it here receives. It expresses itself in needless cruelty [3] and in massacre apparently unprovoked. The sense of the national uniqueness is not inspired, as it often is in the later literature of the Old Testament, by the solemn and radiant sense of a mission. It is a solace to think that this book won its place in the Canon only after a struggle. And yet it has there its own pathetic place. It sheds a very sorrowful light upon the treatment which the Jews had received at the hands of an inappreciative and relentless world. Bitter indeed must have been the persecution which stung the generous and tender hearts that gave us Ruth, into the bigotry, passion, and vengeance that thrill through the fascinating story of Esther.

X

ISRAEL'S TRIUMPH OVER ITS FOES (ESTHER)

About the year 483 B. C.,[4] after a six months' festival in honor of the princes and nobles of his vast empire, Xerxes held a second gorgeous festival for the people in his palace

Xerxes puts away the queen (1)

[1] Num. 23 : 9.

[2] In Mal. 1 : 3 Jehovah's love for Israel is held to be proved by his hatred for Edom, manifest in the desolation of that land.

[3] 9 : 13-15.

[4] About the same date as the notice in Ezra 4 : 6.

at Susa. On the last day, he bade the queen appear to display her beauty. She refused. The angry king consulted his wise men ; and, on the advice of one of them he put her away by a royal decree, lest the example of her contumacy should prove contagious, and sent instructions throughout the various provinces that every man be master in his own house.

He takes Esther in her stead ; Mordecai saves the king's life (2)

Steps were then taken to find a better queen than she. From all the empire fair maidens were gathered to the palace and among them the orphan Esther, cousin and adopted daughter of Mordecai. The king loved her above all the other maidens and made her queen about 479 B. C.[1] Not long thereafter Mordecai saved the king's life by communicating to him through Esther a plot against him ; and his deed was put on record.

Haman's hatred of Mordecai ; the decree of vengeance (3)

Now a certain Haman, promoted by the king above all the other nobles, conceived a deadly hatred of the Jew, Mordecai, for persistently refusing him the obeisance which the king had enjoined, and he sought to gratify his revenge by destroying the Jewish people, root and branch, throughout the empire. By representing them to be seditiously inclined, he obtained from the king a decree for their annihilation, to take effect in eleven months, namely, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, a date fixed by lot.[2]

[1] The year of the battles of Plataea and Mycale, the year after Thermopylæ and Salamis.

[2] *I.e.*, Pur : hence, according to 9 : 26, the name of the festival Purim.

The decree prostrated the Jews with grief. Mordecai contrived to inform Esther thereof, and charged her to implore the king on behalf of her people. Esther knew well the peril of such a course; yet, nerved by Mordecai's appeal, she bravely made up her mind to intercede with the king, cost what it might. "I will go," said she, "and if I perish, I perish."

Esther's resolve to intercede with the king (4)

The king received her graciously, and offered to grant her request even to the half of his kingdom. She only asked, however, that the king and Haman would come next day to a banquet prepared by herself. There the king renewed his promise; but again she invited them to a second banquet. Haman's joy, however, was still clouded by Mordecai's refusal of obeisance. On his wife's suggestion, he prepared a gallows, hoping to secure next day a royal decree for his execution.

Her ingenious plan to enthrall the king (5)

That night the king, to while away the sleepless hours, had the royal records read to him; and finding there mention of Mordecai's unrewarded service, next day he asked Haman, who had come in the hope of securing the royal warrant for Mordecai's execution, what should be done to the man whom the king delighted to honor. This, thought Haman, could be no one but himself, and he accordingly suggested the most extravagant honors. To his horror, he found that, by the terms of his own proposal, he must himself bestow those honors on the hated Mordecai, the Jew; while, to complete his confusion, his

The tables are turned (6)

wife foretold his certain downfall, if Mordecai were really a Jew.

Haman is hanged and Mordecai promoted (7 : 1 to 8 : 2)

With these bodings of doom in his ears, he came with the king to Esther's banquet. In response to the king's third offer, the queen earnestly begged for her own life, and that of her people, imperilled by —Haman! The guilty man trembled. The indignant king, adopting the grim, yet timely hint of one of his courtiers, had him hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai, and Mordecai was installed in Haman's post of honor.

The counter decree (8 : 3-17)

Esther now set herself to reverse, if possible, the previous decree ordering the destruction of the Jews; and the king, regarding her request with favor, empowered Mordecai to issue, with all speed, a decree in the royal name, granting liberty to the Jews to defend themselves by force against all who assaulted them on the day appointed. The decree was received by the Jews with transports of delight; and many of the native peoples became proselytes, for the fear of the Jews was fallen upon them.

The triumph of the Jews (9 : 1-16)

So on the day appointed for the massacre, as it fell out, it was not the Jews, but their enemies, who were the victims; for they were irresistible. The prestige of Mordecai even secured for his countrymen official assistance. The Jews worked their will upon their foes. In the palace alone, they slew five hundred, including the ten sons of

Haman, and at the request of Esther, added three hundred more the following day. In the provinces, where the massacre lasted only one day, seventy-five thousand victims fell.

The Purim festival (9 : 17-32)

Such then is the origin of the glad Purim festival, held on fourteenth and fifteenth of the month Adar, to keep alive the memory of this great deliverance in every Jewish or proselyte family for ever. This ordinance was confirmed by a decree of Esther and Mordecai.

The exaltation and zeal of Mordecai (10)

It is recorded in the royal archives of Persia how Mordecai in his high office—he was second only to the king—won the affection of his Jewish brethren by his great zeal on their behalf.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

I

BOOKS OF REFERENCE

The literature in English on the historical books of the Old Testament from the standpoint of modern criticism is not yet extensive, but it is rapidly growing. On some of the books there is as yet no good up-to-date English commentary. The following list is selected with a view to the needs of the general reader, and avoids, on the one hand, works of a minutely technical nature, and on the other, foreign books which have not been translated.

Driver's "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament" (ninth edition, 1901, Charles Scribner's Sons) is a mine of information. It is absolutely reliable in its details, and cautious in its methods, and forms an exceedingly useful guide to the critical problems connected with each book. Much smaller, but always interesting and illuminating, is Kautzsch's "The Literature of the Old Testament" (translated by Dr. Taylor; published by Williams & Norgate, 1898, and by Putnams, 1899). A "Biblical Introduction," by Bennett and Adeney (Whittaker, 1899), gives a clear and comprehensive presentation of the facts on their literary side. These books

all deal with the whole of the Old Testament, and not exclusively with the historical books.

For a long time, one great barrier to the study of the histories, from which the present Hexateuch has been compiled, was the absence of continuous texts. That barrier has now been removed. The prophetical and priestly texts are presented continuously in Addis's "Documents of the Hexateuch" (vol. i., 1893; vol. ii., 1898, Putnams), and in Bacon's "Genesis of Genesis," 1892, and "The Triple Tradition of the Exodus," 1894; while the prophetic texts alone are presented in Duff's "Old Testament Theology" (vol. i., 1891; vol. ii., 1900, A. & C. Black).

The fullest treatment of the critical problems of the Hexateuch will be found in the Oxford publication, *The Hexateuch*, edited by Carpenter and Battersby (2 vols., 1900, Longmans, Green & Co.), which, besides printing the texts in the order of the English Bible, and relegating each section to its source, discusses clearly and very fully all the literary problems. Briggs's "Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch" (second edition, 1897, Charles Scribner's Sons) is less elaborate, but thorough and very useful. In Addis's volumes mentioned above, the texts are preceded by critical discussions, and Bacon's two volumes are full of marvellously delicate and powerful critical work. There is an interesting and penetrating treatment of the gradual growth of the historical books in McCurdy's "History, Prophecy, and the Monuments" (vols. i.-iii., Macmillan & Co., 1894-1901). For a brief, but very adequate presentation of the Hexateuchal problem the reader may be referred to

W. Robertson Smith's "Old Testament in the Jewish Church," Lecture II. (2d revised and enlarged edition, 1892, D. Appleton & Co.), or to the article "Hexateuch," in the "Encyclopædia Biblica" (Macmillan & Co., 4 vols.), or in the "Dictionary of the Bible," edited by Hastings (4 vols., Charles Scribner's Sons).

For the spirit in which the earlier chapters of Genesis are to be read, the student may consult Ryle's "Early Narratives of Genesis" (Macmillan & Co., 1892), and for Genesis as a whole, Dods's volume in "The Expositor's Bible" (A. C. Armstrong & Co., 1888). Much help may also be found in Professor G. A. Smith's "Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament" (A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1901), and from Professor Davidson's article on "The Uses of the Old Testament for Edification," in the *Expositor* for January, 1900.

The following articles in the two Biblical Dictionaries already mentioned ("Encyclopædia Biblica" and "Dictionary of the Bible") may be consulted with much advantage: Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, and Esther. The volumes containing articles on the remaining books may be expected at no distant date.

Dillmann's great commentary on Genesis (2 vols., translated by Stevenson, 1897, T. & T. Clark, and Scribner's) is very elaborate and exhaustive. Of great value are the commentaries on "Deuteronomy," 1895, "Judges," 1895, and "Samuel," 1899, by Driver, Moore and H. P. Smith, respectively, in the "International Critical Commentary" series (Charles Scribner's Sons). For the reader who is interested in the question of

sources, Bennett's "Joshua," 1899, and Moore's "Judges," 1898, in the "Sacred Books of the Old and New Testaments" series, commonly known as the Polychrome Bible (edited by Haupt, published with English translations, Dodd, Mead & Co.), will be found of great service. On the origin of the Books of Samuel, Cheyne's chapter on "How the Books of Samuel Arose," in "Aids to the Devout Study of Criticism," 1892 (Thomas Whittaker), may be consulted. In the Cambridge Bible series, there is a handy commentary on "Samuel," 1886, by Kirkpatrick, and on "Kings," 1889, by Lumby (Macmillan & Co., each 2 vols.); the commentary on "Ezra-Nehemiah," in this series by Ryle may be strongly recommended. For the rearrangement of the text of Ezra-Nehemiah, see Professor Kent's "History of the Jewish People," 1899 (§§ 88–98), and for the reconstruction of the history which this involves, the same volume §§ 114-211, and Cheyne's "Jewish Religious Life after the Exile," 1898, chapters 1 and 2 (G. P. Putnam's Sons), should be consulted. Bennett's "Chronicles," 1894, in the Expositors' Bible series, is a very useful and able book (Armstrongs). An appreciation of the religious value of the Book of Chronicles will be found in the article on "Chronicles," in Hastings's "Dictionary of the Bible."

Appendix

II

PASSAGES IN THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL AND KINGS OMITTED BY THE CHRONICLER

The story of the career of Saul and of the life of David before his accession to the throne (1 S. 9 to 30).

The opposition of Ishbosheth to David (2 S. 2 to 4).

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